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FIGHT OUT OF RIC FLAIR!"



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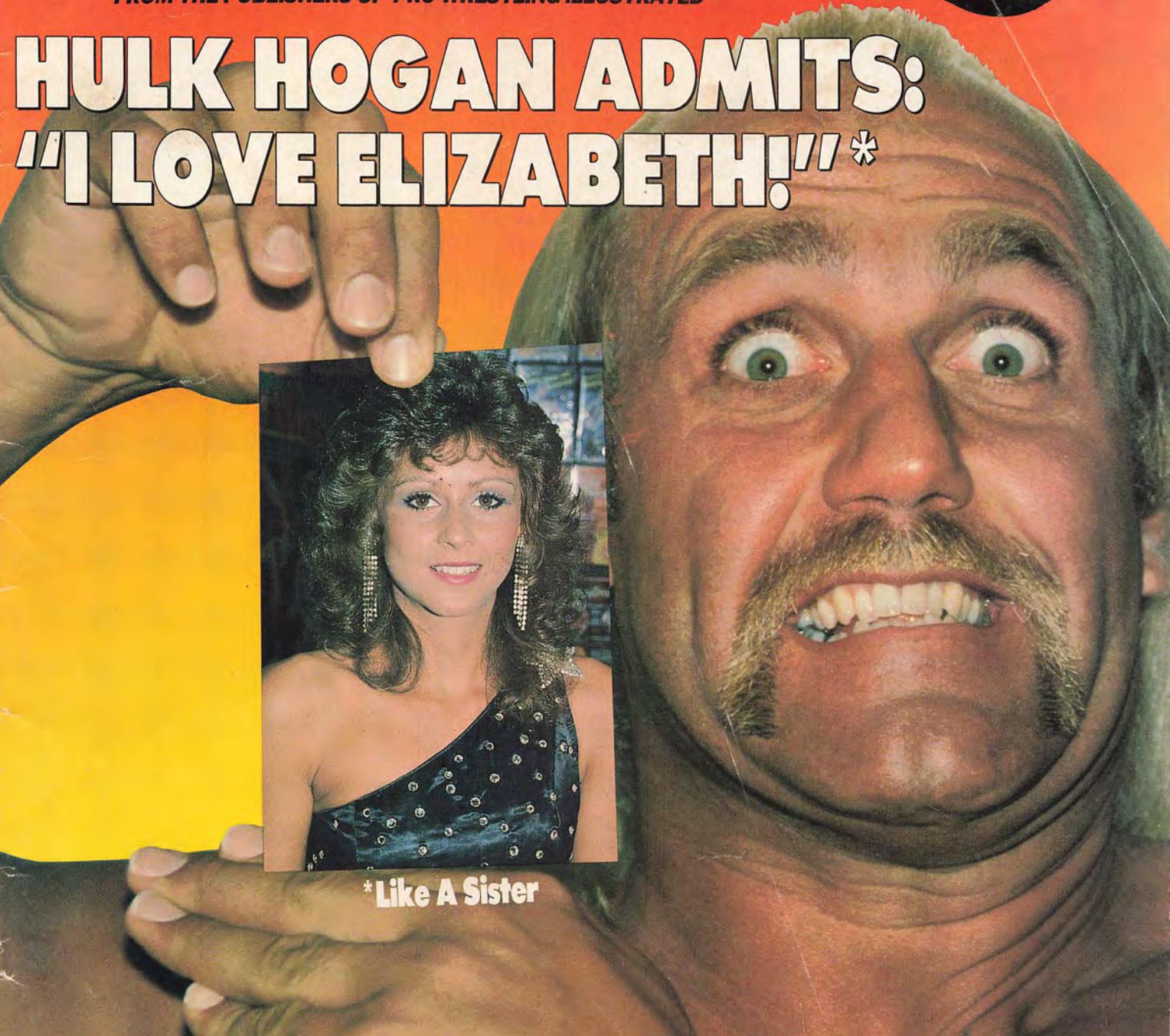
Wrestling

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* Like A Sister



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INSIDE

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Wrestling

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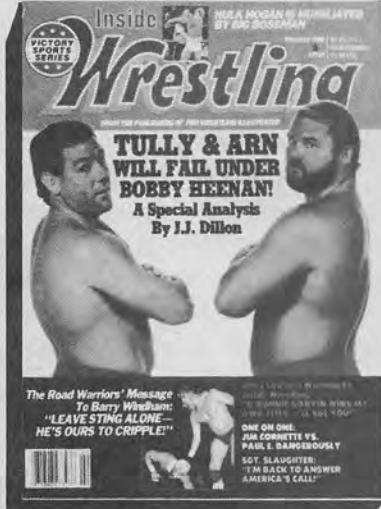
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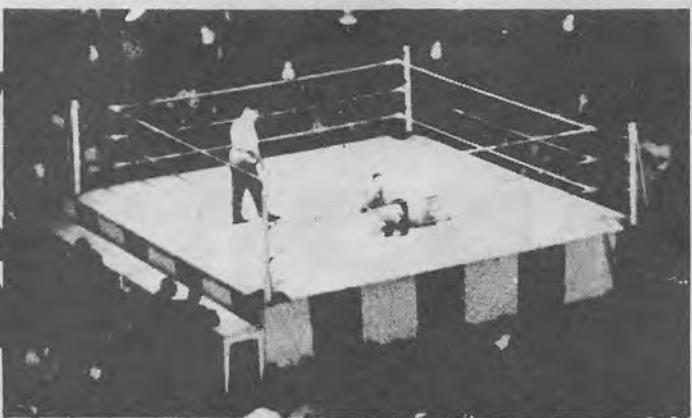
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SINCERELY YOURS

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THE REAL MIDNIGHTS

I'm writing this letter in response to the cover story in your March 1989 issue ("Collision Course! Wrestling Isn't Big Enough For Two Midnight Express Teams").

In this battle, I wholeheartedly side with Paul E. Dangerously and the original and only Midnight Express. Randy Rose and Dennis Condrey are the first model, and Jim Cornette's version is merely a copy with no regard for history. When Paul E. and the *real* Midnight Express blitzkrieged Cornette and the phonies, it was destiny; the truth *always* destroys a lie. Cornette's Express are living a lie.

Paul E. and the real Express must destroy this terrible lie and assume the rightful title as the *only* Midnight Ex-

press. The hourglass is rapidly running out of sand for Cornette's Express.

ARTHUR RISK JR.
Mt. Clemens, MI

GIVE THEM A HOME!

I am writing in regard to the letter by Anne Charron in your March 1989 issue ("Men Without A Home").

Anne states in her letter that the Rougeau brothers are men without a country. I think I can speak for most of the United States when I say that Canada can have the Rougeaus back!

The past year has not been good for Canada. First, the great Wayne Gretzky came to the United States to play for the Los Angeles Kings. Then the country was embarrassed by Olympic runner Ben Johnson's steroid use.

So I would like to tell the Rougeaus to return to Canada. Their country needs them!

MARK ZIENDA
Thurmont, MD

TWO PROPOSALS . . .

These days, it seems hardly a match goes by where the outcome isn't affected by outside interference or just plain rulebreaking. The worst offender, in my opinion, is the NWA.

How else could you explain the fact that four of the five major titles are held by rulebreakers? The NWA had better get its act together before it loses all its fans. The interference of managers and partners is all too common in NWA rings.

I suggest that if the NWA wants managers at ringside so badly, they should put them in a cage. How the heck is a manager supposed to interfere from a cage?

Also, the disqualification rule should be scratched. What's the use of this incredibly stupid rule? I don't know how many times I've seen champions getting pinned, then their manager runs in to make the save. Can you imagine a rule similar to this in other sports? It's like having to beat your opponent by three points to be declared World Series champions. It just doesn't make sense!

These two changes would make the sport more enjoyable and reasonable.

GREG DELANEY
Campbellton, New Brunswick

. . . AND ONE AGREEMENT

I believe all federations, major and minor, should adopt the disqualifica-



Paul E. Dangerously and his "Original" Midnight Express are the *real* thing and Jim Cornette and his men are the imitators, writes Arthur Risk Jr.

tion regulation that currently exists only in World Class. Getting disqualified is nothing more than a simple way for a champion to get the match over with quickly.

It's unjustifiable for champions to conduct themselves in this ridiculous manner. They become negligent in the ring and also acquire a bad reputation. Grapplers who truly possess toughness and skill need not resort to taking the easy way out.

I feel the wrestlers in World Class are some of the toughest in the business because of the disqualification rule. The NWA, AWA, and WWF would be able to boast the same if they had this regulation in effect.

DIANE SEALS
Jenks, OK

TULLY & ARN WON'T FAIL

I would like to make two comments about the February 1989 issue of *Inside Wrestling*.

First of all, I really enjoyed the article "Dan Davis vs. Ken Wayne: Double Nightmare In The CWF!" Living in Pittsburgh, I don't get to see CWF wrestling. The way I keep up with the area is through your fine magazine.

Second, I was really disgusted by another story, "Tully & Arn Will Fail Under Bobby Heenan! A Special Analysis By J.J. Dillon." Mr. Dillon, Tully and Arn are great wrestlers, as you stated, but saying they aren't *smart* wrestlers is a lie. If they weren't smart, they wouldn't have chosen Bobby

Heenan as their manager. You were correct in saying Heenan is not a good manager, but he gets his men title shots. Mr. Dillon, they don't need a manager and they didn't need you. All they need is title matches.

ROBB BRONSON
Pittsburgh



Ric Flair rams Sting's head into the ringpost. Reader Kay Frary thinks the "Stinger" is going to get beaten badly because he's taking on too much competition.



Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard made a smart move when they chose Bobby Heenan as their manager, writes Robb Bronson. Robb disagrees with J.J. Dillon's analysis.

A BITE INTO STING

This letter is directed at all the poor Sting fans out there. After reading the February 1989 issue of *Inside Wrestling* ("The Road Warriors' Message To Barry Windham: 'Leave Sting Alone—He's Ours To Cripple!' ") and the Spring 1989 issue of *Wrestling 89* ("Sting's New Year's Resolutions"), I came to two conclusions. First, Sting is a very funny man; second, Sting is dead meat.

In *Inside Wrestling*, the Warriors stated with much force and conviction that they plan to do great bodily harm to Sting in 1989. I can only believe they mean to continue what they started in 1988.

Then, in *Wrestling 89*, I read Sting ranting and raving about how he is going to take the titles away from Barry Windham and Ric Flair and then (in his spare time, I guess) teach the Warriors a lesson.

All of this I find very funny considering the facts. Let's face it, Sting has tried, to no avail, to take the titles from both Windham and Flair, but (Continued on page 48)

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Stu
Saks

Editor-in-Chief

If someone out there has Jerry Lawler figured out, please drop me a line. His is the most complex, inconsistent, paradoxical personality in the sport.

For all his mysteries, Lawler is no fool. He's been around long enough to know the political pressures he would face by holding both the AWA and World Class titles. The fact is, unification matches are not made to unify titles; they are made to put fannies in seats.

The AWA and World Class Championship Wrestling cooperated for SuperClash III, their December 13, 1988, pay-per-view effort, and a match of this magnitude was, of course, necessary. But if you could get inside the heads of the respective federation leaders, they would have been happy to see the match end in some controversy, with both champions returning home with their belts.

The match did end in controversy, but in this case Lawler was the sole beneficiary. The minute he walked away with both championship belts, though, he should have sensed the trouble ahead. Both World Class and the AWA could not do without a champion for long. If Lawler were smart (and, dammit, he is!), he would have made both federations agree on a plan for how he would defend his unified title in both areas.

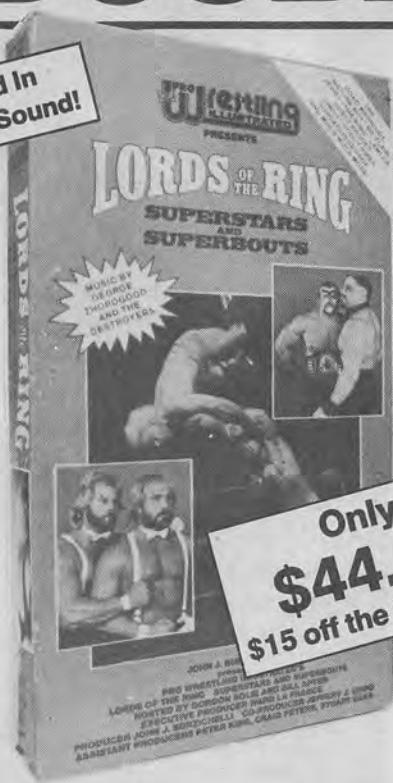
Instead, he forced the AWA's hand by skipping seven scheduled title defenses. "I couldn't be in two places at one time," was his explanation.

Surely, with the political pressure to split the titles, Lawler must have realized that he could have been stripped for missing even one defense. Now he's left with the World Class title (for how long, I don't know), and what he still calls the "Unified Title."

The first of which we'll continue to recognize. The second of which is about as real as Rick Steiner's friend Alex.

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'TOP SECRET'

Behind the Dressing Room Door

by David
Rosenbaum

HULK HOGAN HAS been criticized several times in this column for various reasons, but at this year's Royal Rumble he turned in one of the greatest athletic performances I've ever seen. Talk about domination! It was like Wayne Gretzky skating against a bunch of college players.

All the "Hulkster" did was eliminate eight men during a six-minute-and-18-second span—including an incredible seven straight over just one minute and 20 seconds! Last year, I said the Royal Rumble didn't miss Hogan because it was such a great event; I was obviously very wrong. Hogan was there this year, and the 1989 Rumble, held on January 15 at The Summit in Houston, far eclipsed the '88 version.

The highlight was Hogan's performance. Parity is nice for competition in sports, but it's displays of pure domination we remember. I'll remember this:

At 32:25, Curt Hennig was eliminated by Hogan. Two minutes and 18 seconds later, Koko B. Ware was dumped over the top by Hogan. Luke Williams fell victim to Hogan 14 seconds later. Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson were both sent to the dressing room after another 42 seconds. Hogan was on a roll. He eliminated Warlord with a clothesline 16 seconds later. Eight seconds later, at 38:43, Hogan completed the annihilation by clotheslining both Bad News Brown and Randy Savage.

At that point, Hogan was the only man left in the ring. Finally, at 43:48, it took a concentrated two-on-one effort by Big Bossman and Akeem to get rid of Hogan. But Hogan wasn't finished. He stuck around at ringside for nearly

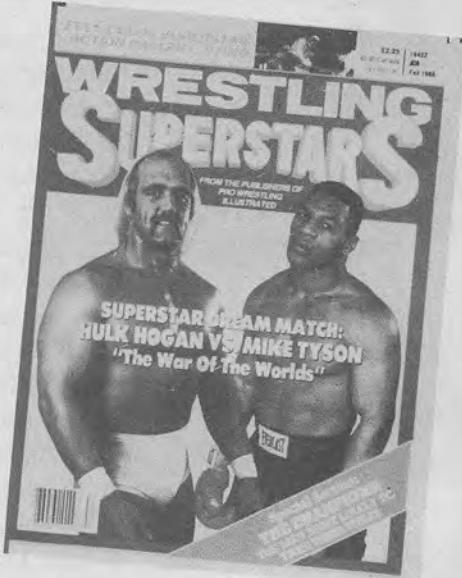
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WHAT A DIFFERENCE a year makes. A look at the May 1988 issue of *Inside Wrestling* reveals the following:

• Curt Hennig was AWA World champion last year; now he's wrestling in the WWF.

• Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson were NWA World tag team champions last year; now they're wrestling in the WWF.

• The Midnight Rockers were AWA World tag team champions last year; now, known simply as The Rockers, they're wrestling in the WWF.

• The Sheepherders were the number-three contenders to the NWA World tag team title last year; now, known as The Bushwhackers, they're wrestling in the WWF.

• The Warlord and The Barbarian were the number-four contenders to the NWA World tag team title last year; now they're wrestling in the WWF.

You get the idea. Stars have been flocking to the WWF like moths to the proverbial flame. Other arrivals in the WWF in 1988 include Ronnie Garvin, Big Bossman, Bad News Brown, Terry Taylor, and—managing The Powers of Pain ever so briefly—Baron Von Raschke.

Indeed, the flow of talent into the WWF in 1988 resembled nothing so much as a tidal wave. But now it seems as if the tide may be turning:

• Magnificent Muraco recently left the WWF for the Stampede area; he captured the North American title shortly after his arrival there.

• The British Bulldogs recently left the WWF, also for the Stampede area; they captured the International tag team belts shortly after their arrival there.

• Junkyard Dog recently left the WWF; he's now competing in the NWA.

• Ken Patera recently left the WWF; he's wrestling independently in the Minneapolis area.

• Butch Reed recently left the WWF; he's now wrestling in the NWA.

Consider also that Bam Bam Bigelow left the WWF to wrestle in the NWA, that Michael Hayes recently left World Class to wrestle in the NWA, and that Rick Steamboat—most recently a top WWF draw—made his return to the NWA.

I think we're beginning to see the first inklings of what will become, in terms of talent acquisition, a very dramatic 1989.

There are two major factors at work in the recent shift

ON THE ROAD

with
CRAIG PETERS



Ronnie Garvin

of talent away from the WWF: 1—Wrestlers (such as Bigelow, Patera, Muraco, and the Bulldogs) are beginning to tire of being lost and left to flounder without recognition (and certainly without title shots) in the massive WWF talent pool; 2—Wrestlers (such as JYD, Reed, Steamboat, and Hayes) are beginning to realize that the NWA is an attractive alternative to WWF competition—particularly with the wide-open possibilities suggested by Ted Turner's involvement in the federation.

"Turner's a winner, I'm a winner, and we belong together," said Freebird Michael Hayes. "Look, wrestling's the kind of sport where you travel from place to place a lot anyway, and I've done all there is to do in World Class. It's time for me to move on, and heading back to Atlanta, to Ted Turner's hometown, to Badstreet U.S.A., is like a homecoming for me, brother."

"See, what's going on right now is exciting," Hayes continued. "You've got a lot of movement into the NWA because it's happening, man, it's where the action is, it's where the top stars are. And it's where *any* athlete, where any man looking to really test himself, wants to be. Believe me, brother, you ain't seen the last of the changes in the NWA. 1989's gonna be hell-breaking-loose time, brother. It's all up for grabs, and I'm grabbin' all I can!"

The NWA situation becomes even more interesting now that Dusty Rhodes has left to compete in Florida. The next few months will see a mad scramble in the NWA as established contenders vie for title shots—and sheer recognition—with hot newcomers.

Like Hayes said: "1989's gonna be hell-breaking loose time."

I think he's right.

A lot has already been said about the WWF's second Royal Rumble, but I'd like to add my own opinion to the discussion:

The Rumble was the best match I've seen in the WWF since Rick Steamboat downed Randy Savage for the Intercontinental title at WrestleMania III.

All 30 stars involved in the bout were competing at peak-level aggressiveness, and friendships were put aside in favor of pure competition (right from the start, in fact, as Demolition Ax squared off against Demolition Smash).

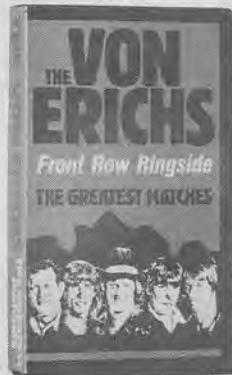
The concept of the bout—one new man added every two minutes (with the order of entry randomly determined)—makes for a sustained level of excitement, since you never know who will enter the ring next. Plus, it guarantees that the match continue for at least a full hour!

All in all, it was a superb bout. I'm already looking forward to the 1990 version! □



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The
VON ERICHs
A FAMILY ALBUM



NAMES MAKI

THE "KING" HAS been dethroned. On January 20, **Jerry Lawler** was stripped of the AWA World title by federation officials for missing seven mandatory title defenses. But that's not the end of this sad tale: Lawler has also been banned for life from the AWA!

"Not appearing for title defenses is an unconscionable offense," AWA President **Stanley Blackburn** said. "Mr. Lawler was the World champion, he represented the AWA, and to simply not appear casts a negative light both on Mr. Lawler and the American Wrestling Association. It is also a disservice to the fans who spend money for tickets."

Lawler, however, denied any wrongdoing.

"I can't be in three places at once," Lawler said. "The CWA wants me, World Class wants me, and the AWA wants me. Well, I'm only one man, and I had to pick my priorities. If the AWA wants to take away my title, fine. There's really not much I can do about it. If you ask me, I think they were just looking for a way to take the title away from me."

That charge, however, appears unfounded. Only 10 days earlier, **Dutch**



JERRY LAWLER

Mantel had apparently defeated Lawler for both the AWA and World Class belts. But AWA, CWA, and World Class officials ruled that special guest referee **Rick Morton** officiated improperly (see the "Hotseat" interview with **Rick Morton** on page 38). Both belts were returned to Lawler.

While Lawler took the loss of the AWA belt lightly, he was incensed about the lifetime banishment. "That means I can't enter the title tournament to get my belt back, and I can't ever go after the World title again," Lawler said. "Think about what that means. They're affecting my livelihood. Believe me, there's a good chance this is going to go to litigation."

Lawler, who still claims to be the "unified titleholder," won the AWA belt from **Curt Hennig** on May 9, 1988, and the World Class title from **Kerry Von Erich** on December 13, 1988. As of press time, he was still



CARLOS COLON

receiving recognition as the World Class champion.

The World Wrestling Council Puerto Rican title, last held by **Hercules Ayala**, has been declared vacant. Ayala lost a loser-leave-town match to **Carlos Colon**, so a tournament will

be held to determine a new champion . . . **Jason the Terrible** is after Colón's WWC Universal title . . . **Joe Malenko**, son of the great **Boris Malenko**, won the PWF junior heavyweight title from **Masanobu Fuchi** on January 20, but lost it five days later to **Mighty Inoue**.

The biggest news in the NWA concerns World champion **Ric Flair's** firing of manager **J.J. Dillon** (see "One On One" on page 46). Now it has



HIRO MATSUDA

been learned that **Hiro Matsuda** is on the verge of buying Flair's contract. Matsuda claims he is rich enough to buy out **Ted Turner** if he wanted, and intends to build up an army of wrestlers. Matsuda, of course, originally trained **Lex Luger** in Florida during 1985 and '86. By the way, Flair and **The Road Warriors** are scheduled for a tour of Japan in early March. The Warriors will team with **Genichiro Tenryu** and defend their NWA six-

N' NEWS

Bill Apter
reporting...

man tag belts; Flair will defend his title against **Jumbo Tsuruta** and Tennyu.

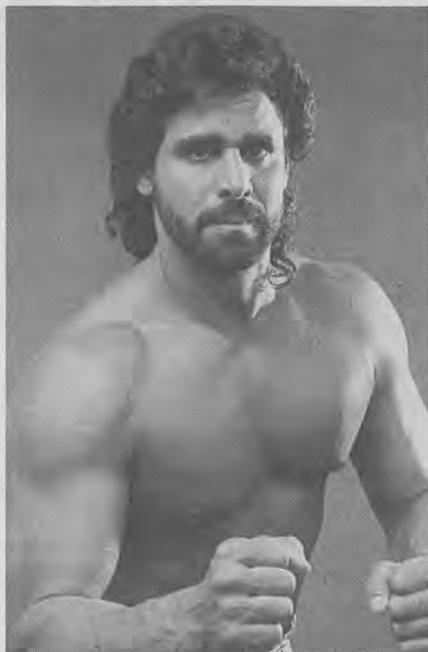
Several notes from the WWF: At press time, two matches have been signed for WrestleMania V on Sunday, April 2, at the Atlantic City Convention Center: **Rick Rude** will meet Intercontinental champ **The Ultimate Warrior**, and **Demolition** will take on **The Powers Of Pain** and manager **Mr. Fuji** in a special two-on-three match. Fuji, of course, managed De-



DEMOLITION

molition to the WWF World tag title. Rude and the Warrior started feuding at The Royal Rumble when Rude attacked the champ during a special posedown competition.

Two of the biggest men in wrestling, **Andre the Giant** and **John Studd**, are on the verge of a gigantic feud. During an interview with **Lord Al Hays**, Andre and Studd got into an argument. A series of matches was immediately signed and there's a good



AL PEREZ

chance the 7'5", 497-pound Andre will meet the 6'10", 364-pound Studd at WrestleMania V.

Florida champion **Mike Graham** is bracing for an all-out assault on his title by former World Class champ **Al Perez**. Perez recently left the NWA for the expressed purpose of dethroning Graham. Perez' younger brother, **Lou Perez**, is a top rookie in the Florida Championship Wrestling area. **Dusty Rhodes** has also returned to the area where he first embraced the American dream. If Perez can win the title from Graham, look for a thrilling Rhodes-Perez war. It may still be winter, but Florida is heating up!

Former British Commonwealth champion **Gama Singh** is back in the Stampede area in pursuit of new champ **Chris Benoit** . . . "Lethal" **Larry Cameron** has issued a challenge to Stampede North American champ **Don Muraco** . . . **Kevin Von Erich** has asked **Jeff Jarrett** to join him in a match against World Class tag champs **The Samoan Swat Team**

... **Scott Armstrong** has been frustrated in his attempts to win the Atlantic Coast junior heavyweight title from **Nelson Royal**.

Roddy Piper continues to make news in Portland. **The Grappler** and **Buddy Rose** recently stole the Pacific Northwest tag belts from **Steve Doll** and **Scott Petersen**, a.k.a. **The Southern Rockers**. Then, during an interview, they attacked Petersen,



THE GRAPPLER

whose left arm was in a sling. But Piper, who helped the Rockers win the belts from Grappler and **Abughadid-en**, ran Rose and Grappler out of the interview area, grabbed the belts, and returned them to the rightful owners. Piper, however, denies that a return to the ring is in the works. "I have no intention of ever wrestling again," Piper said. "I'm just there to help out a couple of friends. Besides, anybody who's seen me all these years knows I'm not much of a spectator."

That's all for now, fans! See you at the matches! □

THE

INSIDER

By Eddie Ellner

[The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Eddie Ellner alone, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.]

NEWS ITEM: RICK MARTEL RETURNS TO THE WWF, WHICH STILL (SURPRISE!) REFUSES TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIS PAST

Despite the worldwide popularity and overwhelming mandate it enjoys, the World Wrestling Federation is still not beyond the loathsome and dangerous practice of revising history. Witness a recent exchange between Jesse Ventura and Vince (You Mean George Bush Was Really Vice

President Once?) McMahon that took place during a wildly stimulating match featuring Rick (Insurance Risk) Martel and Barry (What's A Nice Jewish Boy Like You Doing In A Ring Like This?) Horowitz.

Vince: Rick appears to be back to his old self. Shows no sign of that devastating back injury.

Jesse: Martel is a liability, McMahon.

Vince: That's not what his former tag team partner Tito Santana says.

(Switch to a pre-recorded interview with Santana who wishes his ex-Strike Force teammate good luck in his attempted comeback from back injuries).

Jesse: Who cares what Chico

says?

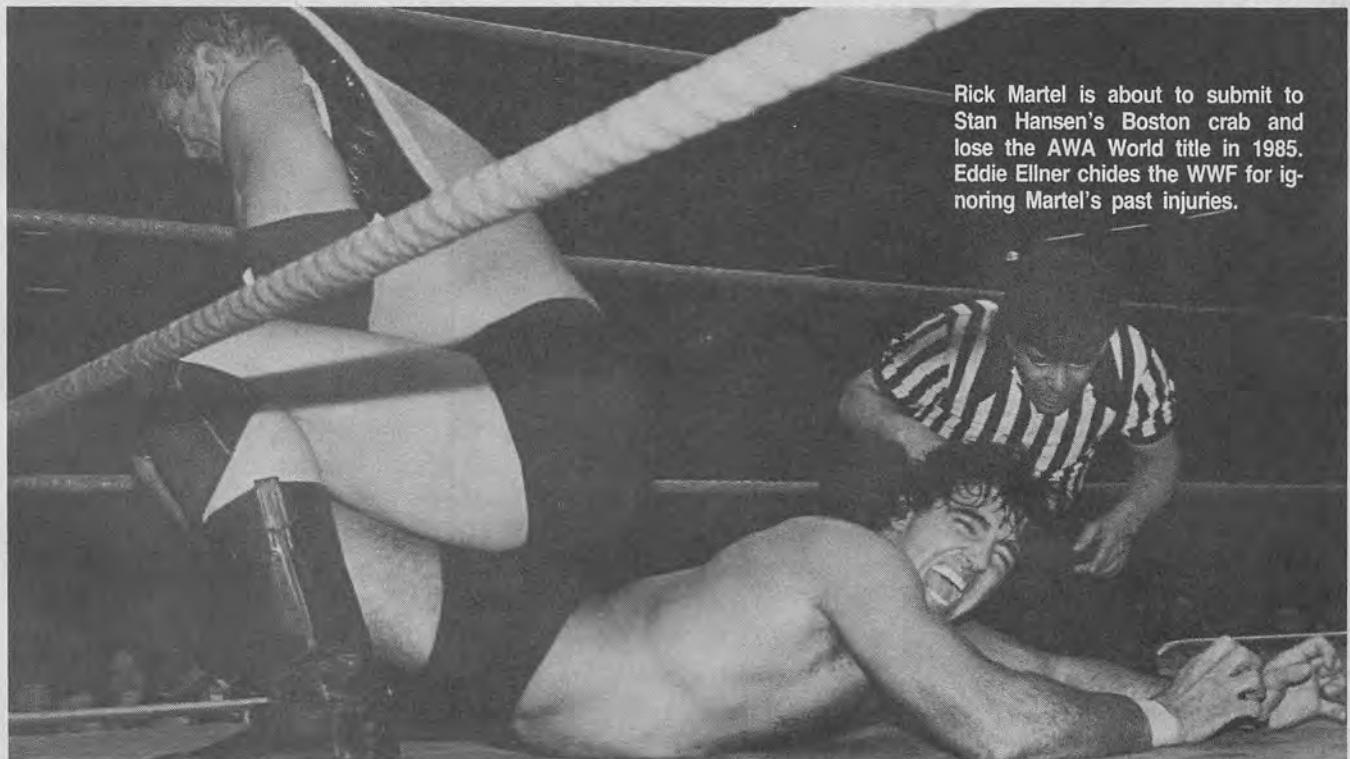
Vince: You're just jealous that they held a world championship belt, something you've never owned.

Jesse: That's because when Hulk Hogan was champion he always ducked me.

The conversation (during which Insurance Risk Martel pinned the ever-powerful Horowitz, no doubt reducing Barry's mother to tears) mutated into another mildly amusing philosophical clash between McMahon and Ventura. The two traded barbs and irrelevancies, pausing every so often to actually describe the action taking place in the ring.

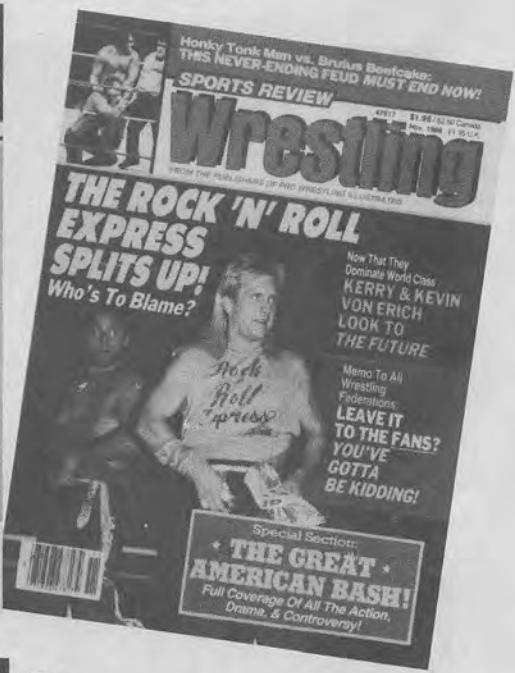
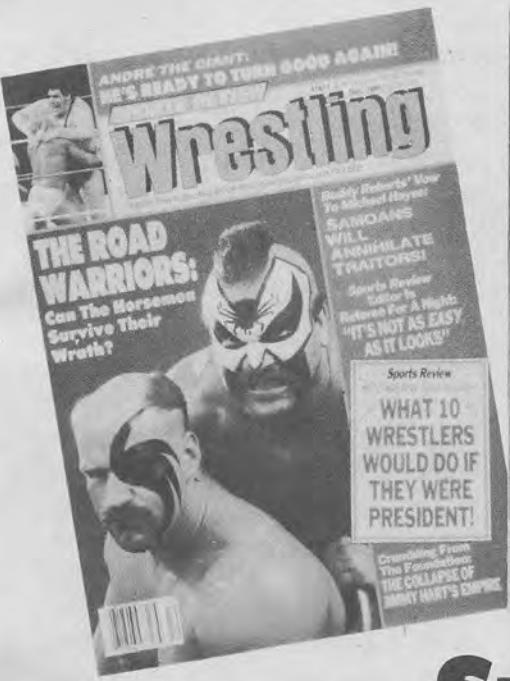
Meanwhile, a few pertinent is-
(Continued on page 56)

Rick Martel is about to submit to Stan Hansen's Boston crab and lose the AWA World title in 1985. Eddie Ellner chides the WWF for ignoring Martel's past injuries.



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A—ON—ASSIGNMENT

BY LIZ HUNTER



WWF World women's champion Rockin' Robin goes after Judy Martin in their title bout on the Royal Rumble card. Liz Hunter is disappointed that most of the fans in attendance paid little attention to this match.

THE ROYAL RUMBLE can be summed up for me in one word: *posedown*. When Rick Rude and The Ultimate Warrior oiled up their limbs and flexed their muscles, it put severe limitations on the objectivity of this working journalist.

Of course, I'm joking. The *real* highlight of the Royal Rumble card took place in the match immediately before the *posedown*. In that bout, Rockin' Robin retained her WWF World women's title with a stunning pinfall victory over Judy Martin. The match was

exciting; but then again, just about *any* title match is exciting. My concern in the wake of this match is that if women's wrestling hopes to recapture the spotlight of years past, it must be promoted better.

I watched uncomfortably as a parade of fans filed toward the refreshment and souvenir stands while the women fought for the title. This would have been unheard of several years ago, when many fans exited the arenas *after* the women had finished, not bothering to stay for the main events.

"What can I say?" said ex-WWF superstar and current AWA, WWC, and NWF women's champion Wendi Richter when I informed her of the crowd's reaction. "It's obvious from my experience that women can share the ring with men. Four years ago I was outdrawing Hulk Hogan in many arenas. A match between two skilled women is just as exciting as a match between guys. Two preliminary wrestlers aren't going to excite a crowd, and neither will two girls who can't wrestle. Unfortunately, there just isn't an abundance of female talent out there today. A lot of girls get in it for the glamor, but never take the time to learn the skills. Because of that, promoters aren't taking us seriously again."

Richter would like to see the establishment of top-quality female wrestling schools around the country so aspiring women grapplers are assured of a well-rounded ring education.

(Continued on page 60)

THE VIDEOTAPE EVENT OF THE YEAR!



You've heard about them . . . you've read about them . . . now you can see them for yourself! Japanese women wrestlers are among the most agile, athletic, acrobatic—and vicious—competitors in the entire mat world. Now, two sensational videotapes bring the dynamic action of Japanese women's wrestling into your own home!

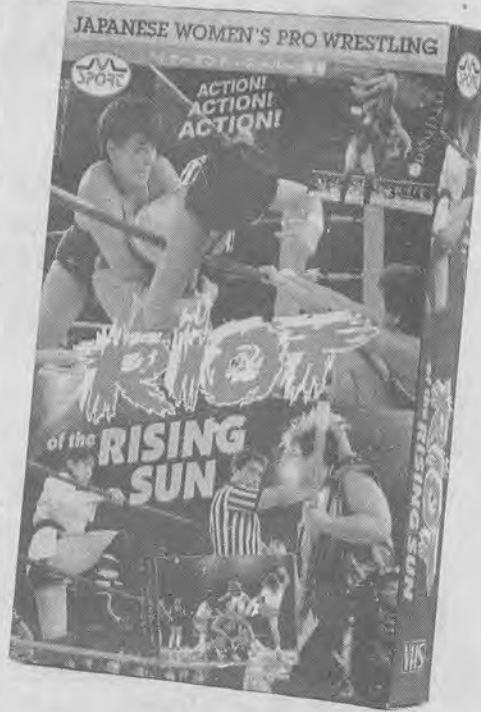
Sample The Excitement!

Jaguar Yokota, The Crush Girls, Devil Masami, The Jumping Bomb Angels, Dump Matsumoto—these are the legends of Japanese women's wrestling. They're all here, and more—including American superstar Wendi Richter. These matches, direct from Japanese television, include the kind of action that, until now, only satellite dish owners or Japanese fans could enjoy. These tapes are certain to become valued collectors' items. They include *complete* matches, not match excerpts!

Slant-Eyed Slaughter

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Wendi Richter & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Okumura
- Nancy Kumi vs. Lucy Kayama
- Monster Ripper & "Devil" Masami vs. Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori & Mimi Hagiwara
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Tarantula
- "Crush Girl" Lioness Asuka vs. "Crush Girl" Chigusa Nagayo



Riot Of The Rising Sun

(running time: approximately 70 minutes)

- Yukari Omori & Ayumi "Jumbo" Hori vs. Norio Tateno & Itsuki Yamasaki—"The Jumping Bomb Angels"
- Masked You & Kaoru "Dump" Matsumoto vs. Lioness Asuka & Chigusa Nagayo—"The Crush Girls"
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. Las Galactia
- "Jaguar" Rimi Yokota vs. "Devil" Masami

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SPECIAL NOTE: These tapes, distributed by Powersports Video in association with American Video, are being sold exclusively for a limited time only in the United States by T.V. Sports. Both tapes include English play-by-play commentary recorded alongside the original Japanese commentary and crowd noise. While the English commentary is poor, the action level and match quality of these bouts more than makes up for it. We're convinced you'll be completely satisfied by these programs.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Do you have a favorite wrestler who has left your area? Are you wondering where he is today? Then this special column is just for you. Each month we will update the whereabouts of four current or former wrestlers



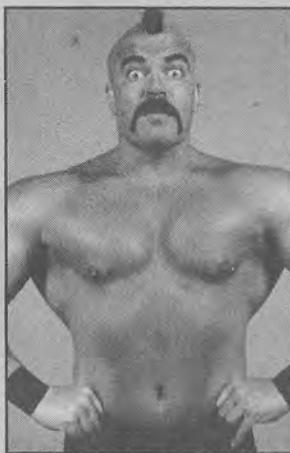
MIL MASCARAS

Reports that Mascaras retired from the sport during a ceremony in Mexico in January are false, according to the former IWA champion. The legendary "Man of 1,000 Masks" tells us that he still wrestles regularly in his native country, and that he soon will tour Japan and possibly South Africa. A popular movie actor, Mascaras recently starred in two new Spanish-language movies that he also produced and directed.



NIKITA KOLOFF

Koloff left the NWA to spend more time with his wife, Mandy, who is suffering from Hodgkin's disease. Koloff will spend much of his time close to his home in North Carolina, tending to Koloff's Fortress of Fitness in Concord. He still wrestles occasionally on independent cards, and was scheduled to compete in a unique boxer vs. wrestler match against cruiserweight Rocky Scarfona on February 18 in Hickory, North Carolina.



TEIJHO KHAN

Citing severe management problems with Sheik Adnan-Al Kaissie during his recent stint in the AWA, Khan is now on his own. He and tag team partner Soldat Ustinov were negotiating to wrestle in the Calgary area, but Stampede officials reported that Khan "had too many demands." Today, Khan is competing in the Intercontinental Wrestling Association, an independent organization operating out of Minneapolis.



THE CRUSHER

"The Wrestler Who Made Milwaukee Famous," also known as Reggie Lisowski, currently works part-time for the WWF as a marketing representative, doing television and radio promotions when the federation appears in the Milwaukee area. Crusher also claims he never formally announced his retirement, and says he can still beat anyone who wants to take him on! Crusher and his wife, Fay, now reside in both Milwaukee and Tampa.

INSIDE WRESTLING

154

CAPSULE PROFILE

RICK "THE DRAGON" STEAMBOAT is on the comeback trail and, at press time, was preparing for a showdown with NWA World champion Ric Flair on February 20 in Chicago ("I've never won a World title, and I don't want to retire until I have") ... A 13-year veteran who has won several titles during his illustrious career, Steamboat was also a fine amateur wrestler ("I was a two-time Florida state wrestling champion") ... Became interested in pro wrestling while watching an interview with Chris Taylor on *Wide World of Sports* ("Taylor was talking about Verne Gagne's wrestling camp in Minnesota, and I immediately sent him my resume and photo") ... Defeated Scott Irwin in his pro debut on February 15, 1976, in Minneapolis ("I was nervous, but I won; I'll never forget that first night") ... Started in the AWA, but moved to the Mid-Atlantic area in 1977, capturing the Mid-Atlantic and U.S. titles from Flair that year ("This war with Flair started early and never really ended") ... Was voted "Rookie of the Year" in 1977 and Tag Team of the Year with Paul Jones in 1978 ("It still surprises a lot of people when they find out I teamed with Jones") ... Be-friended Flair for a short time in 1979 and went after the NWA World tag

RICK STEAMBOAT

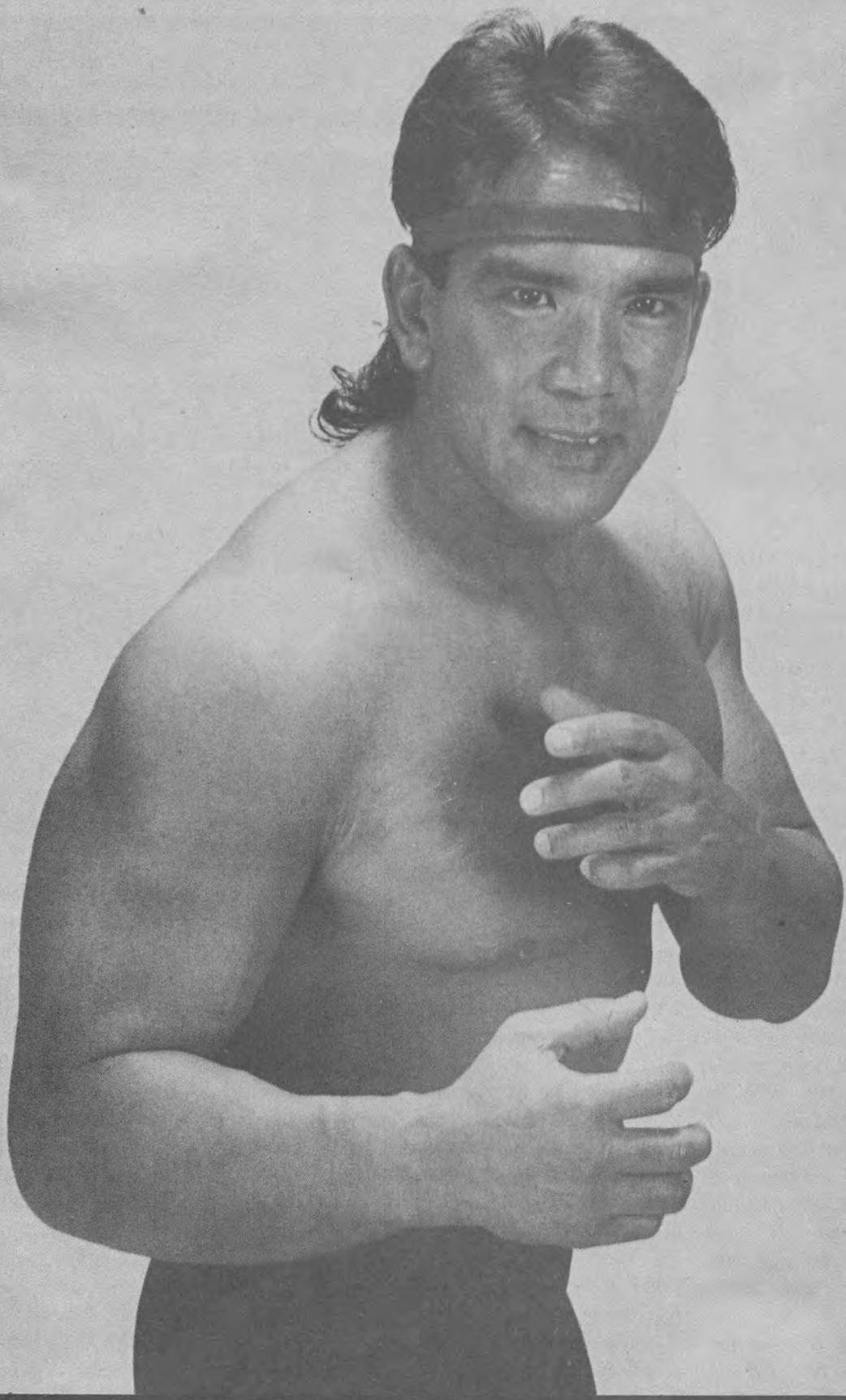


Rick Steamboat pummels Don Muraco. "The Dragon's" return to the NWA is bad news for Ric Flair, who has feuded with Steamboat for more than 10 years.

belts ("An unusual chapter in my career") ... With Jay Youngblood, formed an outstanding team that won the NWA World tag belts several times ("We had this special chemistry that can't be explained") ... Retired for the first time in 1984 so he could devote his time to managing his gym in Charlotte, North Carolina, but returned several months later and beat Dick Slater for the U.S. title ("I've had good luck with comebacks") ... Engaged in a classic feud with Flair in the mid-1980s before entering the WWF in the summer of 1985 ("A career move; it was time for a change") ... Supplemented his outstanding scientific and aerial skills by concentrating more on the martial arts ("It made me unique") ... His drive for the Intercontinental title almost ended in tragedy when champion Randy Savage

drove the timekeeper's bell into his throat ("I couldn't breathe. It was the most awful feeling ever") ... Recovered to score a stirring victory over Savage for the I-C title on March 29, 1987, at WrestleMania III ("The greatest moment of my career, no doubt about it") ... Lost the title two months later to The Honky Tonk Man in Buffalo ("The low point of my career, no doubt about it") ... Took several months off when his wife, Bonnie, gave birth to their first child, then retired again after WrestleMania IV so he could spend more time with his family ("My family is the most important part of my life") ... Made his official return to the NWA on January 18 in Atlanta by pinning Flair in a tag team match ("I was sending a signal to Flair that this is going to be the year of 'The Dragon'"). □

CAPSULE PROFILE PINUP



RICK STEAMBOAT

BACK ISSUES OF



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August 1979/Stories include: Flair, Garvin, Race, Sammartino.

September 1979/Stories include: Steamboat, Mascaras, Strongbow, Garvin.

February 1980/Stories include: Patera, Snuka, Santana, Albano.

April 1980/Stories include: Hogan, Rich, Backlund, Mascaras.

May 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Murdoch, Mulligan, Bockwinkel.

June 1980/Stories include: Putski, Andre, Hernandez, Keirn.

August 1980/Stories include: Sammartino, Wrestling II, Baker, Koloff.

September 1980/Stories include: Mascaras, Rhodes, Ladd, Iron Sheik.

November 1980/Stories include: Rhodes, Putski, Bockwinkel, Koloff.

January 1981/Stories include: Race, Snuka, Morales, Slater.

April 1981/Stories include: Albano, Sammartino Jr., Race, McGraw.

May 1981/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Von Erich, Backlund, Santana.

June 1981/Stories include: Rhodes, Hansen, Piper, Gagne.

September 1981/Stories include: Patera, Koloff, Khan, Junkyard Dog.

January 1982/Stories include: Flair, Hogan, Race, Humpertink.

February 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Flair, Steamboat, Rhodes.

March 1982/Stories include: Rich, Backlund, Idol, Spoiler.

April 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Andre, Von Erich, Piper.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Hogan, Von Erich.

June 1982/Stories include: Valentine, Von Erich, Slaughter, Morales.

July 1982/Stories include: Hogan, Rhodes, Steamboat, Adonis.

August 1982/Stories include: Andre, Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Backlund.

September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.

October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.

December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.

February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBlase, Race.

March 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Graham, Johnson, Funk.

April 1983/Stories include: Snuka, Patera, Kabuki, Rich.

May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.

June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.

July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.

August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.

September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.

October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.

November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.

December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.

April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.

May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.

June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBlase.

July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.

August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.

September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.

October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.

November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.

December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.

January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.

February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.

March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.

May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.

June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.

July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.

August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.

September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.

October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.

November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.

December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.

January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.

February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.

March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.

April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts

May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.

June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.

July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.

August 1986/Stories include: Wrestlemania 2, Garvis, Martel, Fab Ones.

September 1986/Stories include: Andre, Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.

October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.

November 1986/Stories include: Warriors-Flair, Bulldogs, Watts, Adams.

December 1986/Stories include: Hogan-Adonis, R&R Express, Baby Doll.

January 1987/Stories include: Rude-Flair, Piper, T.A., Taylor.

February 1987/Stories include: Hogan-Piper-Orndorf, Taylor, Flair.

March 1987/Stories include: Flair, Missy, Luger, Bulldogs, Koloffs.

April 1987/Stories include: Windham, Steamboat, Ellering, Duggan.

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September 1988/SPECIAL ISSUE: Color coverage of WMIV, Parade of Champs, Crockett Cup. Plus: Lawler, Von Erich, Hart, Cornette.

October 1988/Stories include: Megapowers vs. Megabucks, Horsemen, Lawler.

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December 1988/Stories include: Powers of Pain, Ultimate, Flair, Piper.

January 1989/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan, Sting, Arn, Kerry-Lawler.

February 1989/Stories include: Hogan-Bossman, Tully & Arn, Warriors-Windham-Sting.

March 1989/Stories include: Hennig, Midnights-Midnights, Fuller & Golden, Ultimate.

INSIDE WRESTLING

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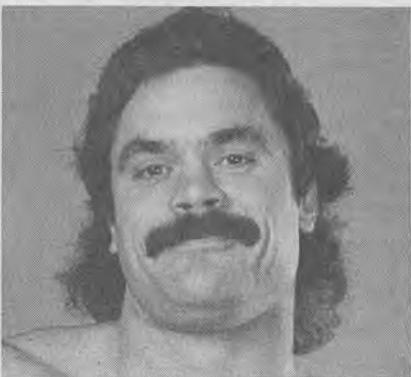
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BINGHAMTON, NY By Denny Burkholder



BRUTUS BEEFCAKE
vs.
RICK RUDE



Late in the match, Beefcake attempted his famous sleeperhold, but was forced to break when Rude grabbed the ropes. Rude pulled himself out of the ring to gain a breather, then returned just seconds later. Rude tried to knock Beefcake out with his "Rude Awakening" neckbreaker, but this time Brutus grabbed the ropes. In a desperation move, Rude threw Beefcake across the ring. Brutus promptly rebounded off the ropes with a flying bodypress and scored the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Andre the Giant defeated Jake Roberts by disqualification . . . The Hart Foundation drew with Jacques & Raymond Rougeau . . . Ron Bass defeated Tito Santana . . . Curt Hennig pinned Paul Roma . . . The Bushwhackers beat The Bolsheviks . . . Tim Horner defeated Barry Horowitz.

MEMPHIS, TN By Jeff Peters



SID VICIOUS
vs.
ROBERT FULLER



In this "loser-leave-town" match, the powerful Vicious dominated Fuller most of the way. Then Fuller's valet, Sylvia, did something similar to what Elizabeth did at SummerSlam 88: She got up on the ring apron and peeled off most of her clothing until she was wearing only a tank top and skimpy shorts. As Vicious was staring at her, Fuller attacked him from behind with a foreign object and scored the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Shogun & Samurai defeated Scott Steiner & Todd Morton . . . Jeff Jarrett & Tracy Smothers beat Frankie Lancaster & Jimmy Golden by DQ . . . Jerry Lawler & Wendell Cooley defeated Rick Morton & Dutch Mantel . . . Adrian Street, Bill Dundee, & Miss Linda beat Beauty, Beast, & Downtown Bruno.

TORONTO, ONTARIO By Henry Tyminski



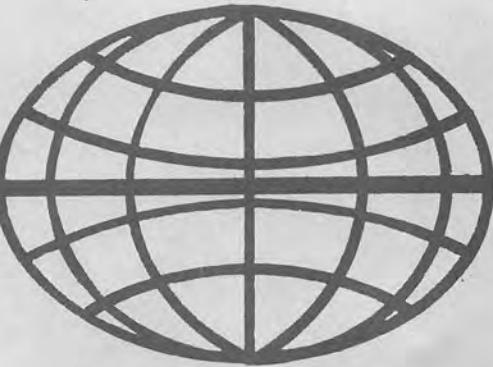
HARLEY RACE
vs.
KING HAKU



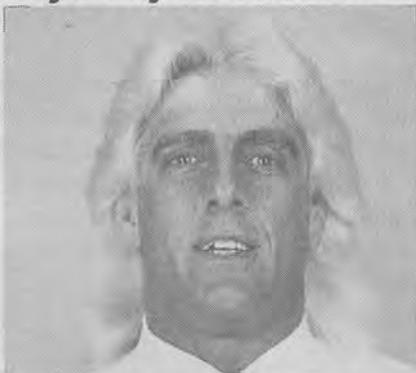
In the opening moments of the bout, both men were evenly matched. After several minutes, Haku threw Race out of the ring and went after him. Race slammed Haku and returned to the ring. Minutes later, both men traded headbutts. Suddenly, Haku delivered a kick to Race's jaw. But Race recovered, got the upper hand, and tried for a superplex. Haku pushed him off the second turnbuckle, planted an elbow into his chest, and got the pin.

OTHER BOUTS: Randy Savage defeated Bad News Brown . . . Demolition and The Powers of Pain were both disqualified . . . Ted DiBiase defeated Sam Houston . . . Rockin' Robin beat Judy Martin . . . Akeem squashed Hillbilly Jim . . . Iron Mike Sharpe clobbered Jose Luis Rivera.

WRESTLING CAPITALS



MILWAUKEE, WI
By Andy Abrahamson



RIC FLAIR
vs.
RICK STEINER



At the 15-minute mark, Flair applied the figure-four leglock. Referee Tommy Young saw Flair use the ropes for leverage and broke the hold. Steiner pounded Flair, and Flair tried the figure-four again, but Steiner reversed the move and went for the pin. At the last second, Flair got his foot on the ropes, but Steiner thought he had scored the win. Flair snuck up on Steiner and hit him from behind. With his legs on the ropes, Flair pinned Steiner.

OTHER BOUTS: Dick Murdoch won a Buhkhouse Stampede . . . Road Warrior Animal beat Dusty Rhodes by DQ . . . Lex Luger & Bam Bam Bigelow beat Abdullah the Butcher & Barry Windham . . . The Texas Broncos defeated The Commandos . . . Junkyard Dog beat Russian Assassin I . . . Bobby Fulton drew with Randy Rose.

NEW YORK, NY
By Mark Stroming



RANDY SAVAGE
vs.
BAD NEWS BROWN



The "Macho Man" attacked Brown before the bell and continued with an impressive aerial assault that included diving at Brown through the ropes onto the arena floor. Brown gained the advantage and attempted his finishing move, the "ghetto blaster." Savage ducked the kick, however, and scored the pin. Brown tried to thwart Savage's postmatch celebration by charging the ring wielding a garbage can, but Savage cleared the ring to the delight of the fans.

OTHER BOUTS: The Powers of Pain defeated Demolition by countout . . . Greg Valentine pinned Ronnie Garvin . . . Terry Taylor drew with The Blue Blazer . . . Curt Hennig pinned Koko B. Ware . . . The Bushwhackers defeated The Bolsheviks.

BASSETT, VA
By Steve Butler



EDDIE GILBERT
vs.
KENDALL WINDHAM



Initially slow action heated up when Windham had Gilbert pinned against the ropes. When referee Tommy Young called for a clean break, Windham slapped Gilbert in the face. Windham threw Gilbert out of the ring and rammed his head into the timekeeper's table. Windham started kicking Gilbert outside the ring. After the action returned to the ring, Windham missed with a shoulderblock, then Gilbert leaped over the ropes and pinned Windham with a sunset flip.

OTHER BOUTS: Ron Simmons defeated Commando Boone . . . Steve Casey defeated Kevin Sullivan by DQ . . . Misty Blue & Heidi Lee Morgan beat Kat LeRoux & Linda Dallas . . . The Fantastics beat Kevin Sullivan & Mike Rotundo by DQ . . . Larry Zbyszko & Brad Anderson beat Dustin Rhodes & Curtis Thompson.



Matt Brock's PLAIN SPEAKING

HOUSTON, TX: You'd think only a Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage main event could save an undercard featuring Sam Houston vs. Barry Horowitz, Jim Powers vs. Steve Lombardi, Rockin' Robin vs. Judy Martin, and a posedown between Rick Rude and The Ultimate Warrior. But wouldn't you know it, the WWF pulled one out of its hat. Of course, when you throw Randy Savage, Hulk Hogan, Demolition, The Powers of Pain, Curt Hennig, Ronnie Garvin, John Studd, Ted DiBiase, Tully Blanchard, Arn Anderson, Andre the Giant, Jake Roberts, and a bunch of others into the feature bout, you have a better-than-average chance of coming up with something

like the one we got right off the bat between Demolition partners Ax and Smash, and the one later on between Hogan and Savage. Studd, who recently returned to the game after a long absence, won the whole thing by eliminating Akeem and Ted DiBiase; I say the big guy is ready to make some waves in the WWF. The Rumble, of course, made all the waves anyone could ask for. If only every WWF card were this good. WrestleMania is supposed to be the WWF's best event of the year, but I'll take the Rumble and the Survivor Series every time. This sport is always at its best without the glitz.

ATLANTA, GA: It's only January and the biggest story of 1989 has already been written. You can forget about the other 11 months, because they're never going to top this one. For the third time, Rick Steamboat has come back from a brief retirement,



ACTION AT THE ROYAL RUMBLE

worth watching. Last year, the NWA's Bunkhouse Stampede final was held on the same night as The Royal Rumble, and I made the mistake of attending the Bunkhouse. Well, there was no major NWA card tonight, and I'm glad I came to Houston for this one. The Royal Rumble is absolutely a great concept, and there's nothing even the WWF can do to ruin it. First of all, you're guaranteed an hour of action. Second of all, every wrestler is forced to go all-out, because if he doesn't, he'll get eliminated. Finally, you get matchups you've only dreamed of,



RICK STEAMBOAT

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

and he's about to go after NWA World champion Ric Flair once again. Now that's big news! Those of us who were there for the Flair-Steamboat wars in the early and mid-1980s will never forget them. Talk about classic battles! The May 1984 match at the Byrne Meadowlands Arena in New Jersey may have been Flair's greatest title defense ever. It may be five years later, but neither of these guys has lost much. Flair proved he's still a top champion by holding off Sting and Lex Luger several times, and Steamboat was WWF Intercontinental champ a little less than two years ago. Now he's back and looking great. Obviously, Steamboat didn't spend eight months on the sidelines watching TV and shoving pretzels and potato chips down his throat. He was in great shape when he appeared here on January 18 and teamed with Eddie Gilbert against Flair and Barry Windham. Let me tell you something, Flair had the fear of God written all over his face, and he wasn't a happy man when Steamboat pinned him. Of course, Luger also pinned Flair in a meaningless tag team match, but don't even try to compare Steamboat with Luger. If Steamboat's return is an example of what we have to look forward to now that Ted Turner owns the NWA, the WWF is about to get a run for its money.

TOKYO, JAPAN: Reds vs. Japs. That's the big talk in this town ever since word got out that some Japanese wrestling officials are talking with the amateur wrestling bigwigs over in Russkie land about a series of matches between the top stars from both countries. It would be held in Tokyo, probably during May or June, although I'm not sure which wrestlers would be involved. The interesting thing about this is that professional wrestling doesn't exist in Russia. Their amateur wrestlers are among the best in the world, but you're not going to find any Ric Flairs or Hulk Hogans walking through Red Square. That's why Nikita Koloff, Ivan Koloff, The Russian Assassins, and all the others were sent over here. So, if it's the Japanese pros against the Russian Greco-Romans, it'll be interesting to see what rules the matches are conducted under. One thing's for sure: The Commies don't give in to anyone. But I can't



ANTONIO INOKI

see too many Japanese knocking down the doors to watch Antonio Inoki and Tatsumi Fujinami go at it Greco-Roman style against some unknown Russian. More on this next month. I have to contact my network of sources to find out what's *really* going on. I guarantee you, though, that if this thing is actually worked out, I'll be there.

MIAMI, FL: An old buddy of mine calls and says, "Hey, Matt, why don't you come down for the Super Bowl? I can get some passes and we can spend the whole week here." Well, my first mistake was accepting the invitation. But I figured I needed the vacation and, with all the big cards coming up, I'd be busy for months. Anyway, the Monday night before the game, we go out for a walk near our hotel and end up in this rundown section of town called Overtown. You've heard of Overtown. Before we knew it, we were in the middle of a war zone, rocks and bottles being thrown all over the place, looting, fires, it looked like a Royal Rumble gone haywire. That was it for me. I may be a reporter, but I'm no war correspondent. Combat with guns and knives just isn't my game. Somehow we got back to the hotel safely, then I packed my bags and left town, happy to be alive. You can add Miami to the list of places where I won't willingly go again. □

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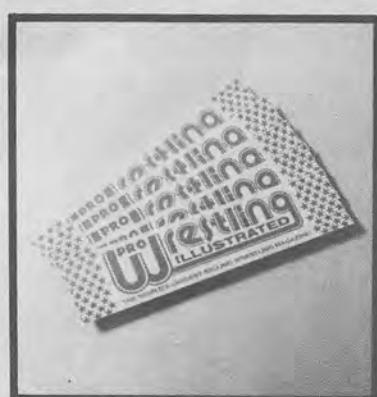
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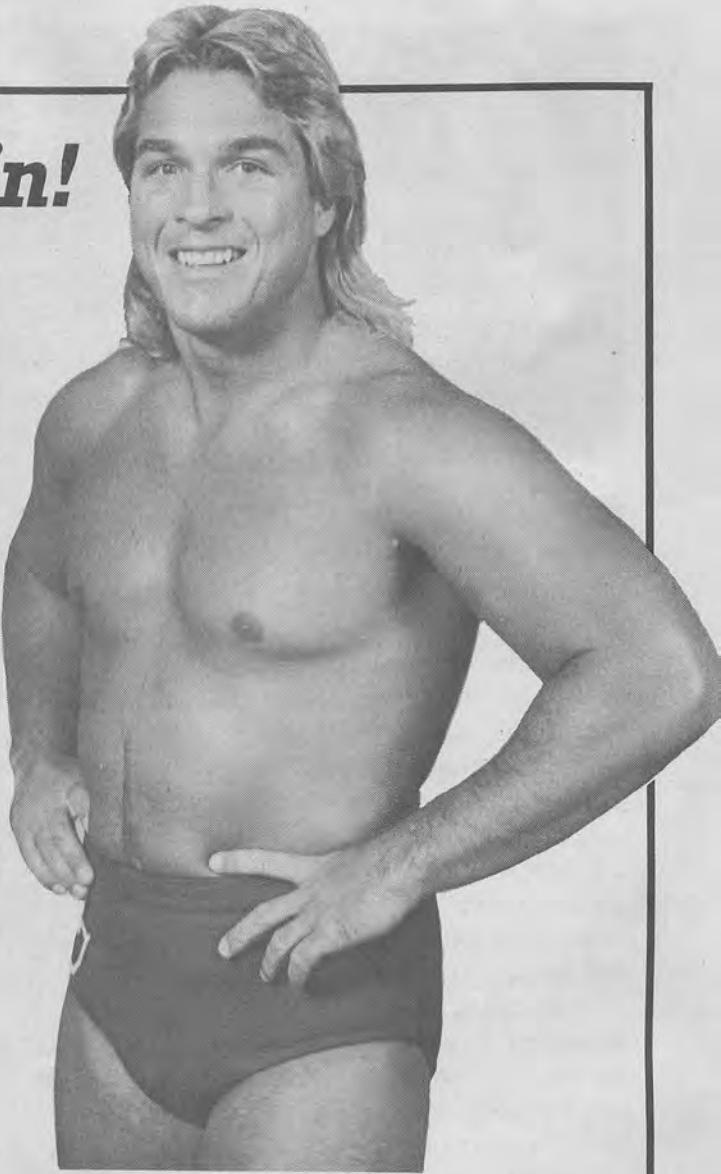
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He's Himself Again!

TERRY TAYLOR DUMPS THE WEASEL - AND THE ROOSTER



Photos by David Fitzgerald

Terry Taylor was one of the top young talents in wrestling, but Bobby Heenan brainwashed him into believing he could never make it on his own. After months of abuse, Taylor broke away from "The Brain" and proved that The Red Rooster won't be anybody's fool anymore!

By Bob Smith

LIKE THE MYTHICAL phoenix rising gloriously from its own ashes, Terry Taylor has been reborn.

May The Red Rooster rest in peace.

For several months, Taylor was the virtual slave of Bobby Heenan, doing everything his manager ordered him to do. As The Red Rooster, Taylor was an apologetic, simpering lackey who jumped at the sound of Heenan's voice. When Heenan said he lacked talent, the Rooster smiled and nodded

his head in agreement. When Heenan told Rooster he wasn't big enough or strong enough, the protege promised he would work harder to please his manager.

Clearly, this wasn't the same Taylor who once terrorized World Class and the UWF. Before arriving in the WWF, Taylor had established himself as a competitive, sometimes violent man, but one whose talents couldn't be questioned. Disheartened by his poor

WWF debut, Taylor traded his feared reputation for a new image as The Red Rooster.

It didn't take long for Taylor to get fed up with Heenan's selfish motives. On one historic night, Taylor wiped away any doubt that he had lost his competitive spirit. He realized he had wasted months trying to please a man who only views his wrestlers by how much money he can make from them.

Finally, The Red Rooster became



Terry Taylor again.

Watching Taylor disintegrate was one of the saddest sights of 1988. When the Florida native decided to enter the WWF last July, he was still the same incredibly arrogant man the fans had come to know. He was so sure of himself that he simply walked away from World Class, leaving his Texas title behind!

"Who needs World Class?" asked an insolent Taylor in an interview in the October 1988 issue of *Sports Review Wrestling*. "Who needs the Texas title? I've got much bigger things in store for me."

Taylor believed he would immediately become a top WWF contender, but it was not to be. He wrestled scientifically at first, but his on-the-mat ring style was met with indifference by the fans. He began rulebreaking, but that didn't help his cause, either. Taylor could put up with being cheered or booed, but he couldn't deal with cries of "boring!"

Almost instantly, Taylor's confidence began to wane. He lost to Curt Hennig, but it was a defeat he could deal with considering that Hennig was a former AWA World champion. But then he lost to an aging Iron Sheik. Finally, on one fateful night in August, he was defeated by the semi-active, semi-talented Hillbilly Jim in less than eight minutes.

"Taylor was confused and frustrated," said noted WWF expert Thomas



Terry Taylor is wary of instructions received from Bobby Heenan (top left). Taylor dumped Heenan when the manager became too demanding. "Red Rooster" Taylor knees Paul Roma in the midsection (above) and holds Blue Blazer to the mat (below).



Pilliard. "When Taylor left World Class, he was one of the proudest and most confident athletes in the world. Just one month later, he was a shell of his former self, so to speak. After the match against Hillbilly Jim, Taylor went into the dressing room and tore it apart. A lot of people were afraid he might quit the sport."

Although he didn't leave the WWF, no sign of the once-proud athlete known as Terry Taylor could be found. In September, he signed a contract with Bobby Heenan and suddenly became The Red Rooster, a man who believed he could only succeed with Heenan calling all the shots. Taylor

had suffered through a hard baptism of fire in the WWF and was desperate for anything that could turn his luck around. For a while, it worked. The Rooster gained a solid string of victories under Heenan's tutelage.

With each passing win, however, Taylor was losing his identity. He was being verbally abused in front of thousands of people every night. He was miserable.

Heenan's indifference to Taylor's eagerness to please was also apparent. On one occasion, Taylor held the ring ropes open for his manager, but Heenan chose to totally ignore him, making his entrance through an oppo-

site side of the ring. Many times, Heenan would order Taylor out of the ring during matches and chastise him for not following his orders.

"You knew something had to give," said Pilliard. "Taylor put up with Heenan for three months, mainly because he was winning. I figured that the first time he lost, there might be a rift. Actually, it was more like an explosion!"

The big bang was heard on December 7 at The Sundome in Tampa, Florida. Taylor was wrestling Tito Santana in a match that was running even—until Heenan got involved in the proceedings. At one point, Heenan shoved Taylor during an argument outside the ring. But when Taylor shoved Heenan back, the manager couldn't believe it. The Rooster was proving he wasn't chicken!

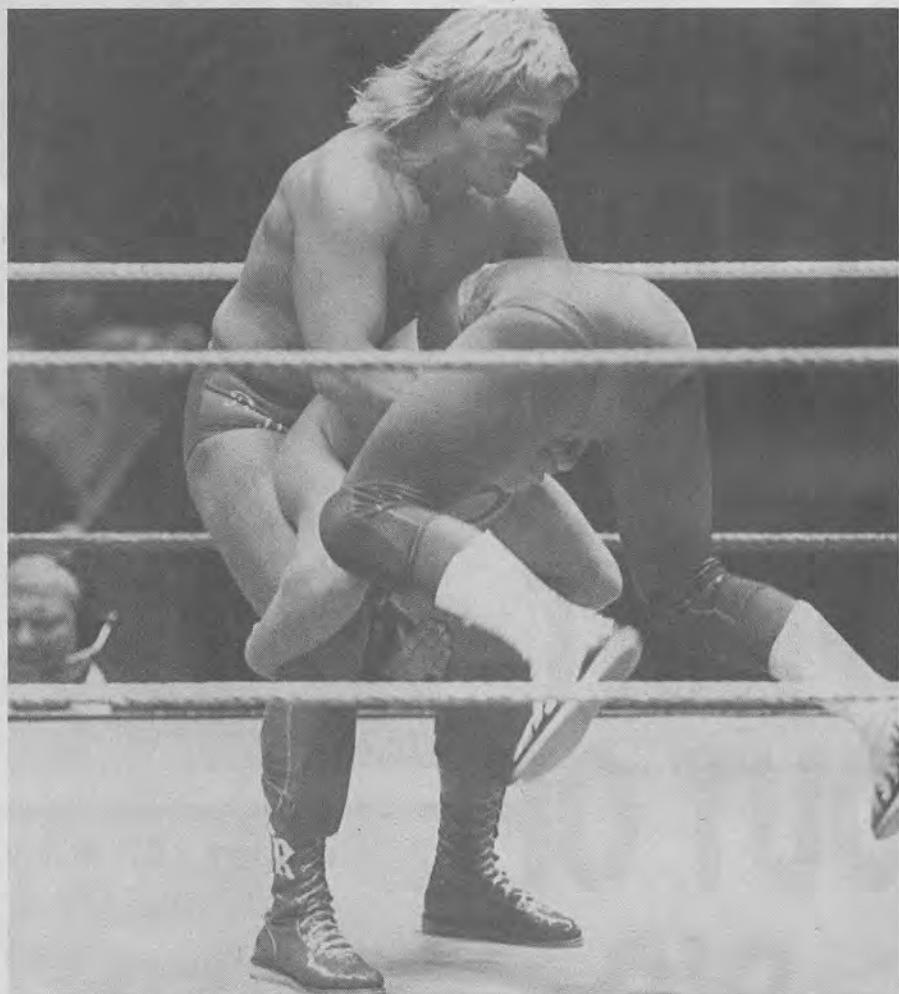
Taylor and Heenan screamed at each other throughout the match, but the end came when Taylor turned to answer one of Heenan's insults. Santana simply rolled up Taylor for the pin. Heenan ran into the ring and again screamed at Taylor. Assuming Taylor was still his meek, willing protege, he slapped him across the face.

It was as if the slap instantly turned Taylor into his old self. He responded by beating Heenan with a savage ferocity—including the final right cross that knocked "The Weasel" out of Taylor's life forever.

Almost. Heenan, obsessed with the idea that he can make *anybody* a star, signed preliminary wrestler Steve Lombardi just days after the Tampa incident. Heenan has ordered Lombardi to sneak-attack Taylor several times, but Taylor has bounced back from the attacks with a new-found enthusiasm and a desire to obliterate Heenan from his life once and for all.

Meanwhile, Taylor has continued to wrestle superbly, scoring victories over top opponents like The Blue Blazer and Koko B. Ware. Suddenly, he has a bright future again—and he's doing it all on his own.

Welcome back, Terry Taylor. You've been gone too long. □



Taylor attempts to piledrive Blue Blazer (above). Blazer executes a spinecrusher on Taylor (below). Already a fine wrestler in his own right, Taylor surprised many when he submitted to Heenan's wishes. Now, thankfully, he's on his own again.



STING: “I TOOK ALL THE FIGHT OUT OF RIC FLAIR!”

Sting pursues a bloody Ric Flair out to the arena floor. Sting has wrestled his greatest matches against the NWA champion.



Unable to beat Ric Flair for the NWA World title, Sting has settled for a lesser victory. He claims to have won the mental war against Flair, and is ready to take credit when another wrestler—even if it's Rick Steamboat—dethrones the “Nature Boy”

By David Rosenbaum

LAST MARCH, WHEN Sting held Ric Flair to a 45-minute draw at the first Clash of the Champions, the world thought it would soon have a new NWA World champion on its hands. The epic clash was a Match of the Year candidate; it certified Sting as one of the finest young stars in the sport.

Nearly a year later, we're still waiting for Sting to fulfill his promise. As is usually the case, Flair was able to adjust to Sting and find a way to neutralize his high-flying power attack. These days, the “Na-

ture Boy” is concentrating his abilities on holding off the challenge of Rick Steamboat while Sting is merely another challenger, waiting for his occasional shot at glory.

But Sting feels he has a stake in the Steamboat-Flair war. It is a stake that has more to do with pride than anything else, offering a prize more symbolic than tangible. For if Steamboat is able to win the NWA World title from Flair, Sting thinks he's the one to thank.

“I took all the fight out of Flair,” Sting said, bubbling with his usual

enthusiasm. “Maybe I've never been able to pin him, but he's had to use every bit of energy in his mind and body to hold me off. I emotionally and physically exhausted him, made him ready for the kill, and if Steamboat's the one that takes advantage of what I did, so much the better. I'd rather see a man like Steamboat on top than a slug like Flair.”

If nothing else, the draw with Sting last March put the fear of losing in Flair's mind. But what has Sting gained since then? Are his

words merely the hollow gloating of a man who has yet to attain what everyone thought he would get so quickly? Has Luger fallen into the Luger trap? Unable to put Flair away in their early battles, both Sting and Luger have found it more difficult than anticipated to put him away later.

"Don't let anyone tell you that Flair's not a great wrestler," Luger said. "The thing is, every great athlete in every sport has been defeated. Muhammad Ali lost in boxing. Tom Seaver didn't win every game he pitched. *Everybody* has their weaknesses, and Flair definitely has his. The great thing about Flair, though, is the way he adjusts. He finds ways to win, and he always learns something from a match. It's hard to get him to make the same mistake twice."

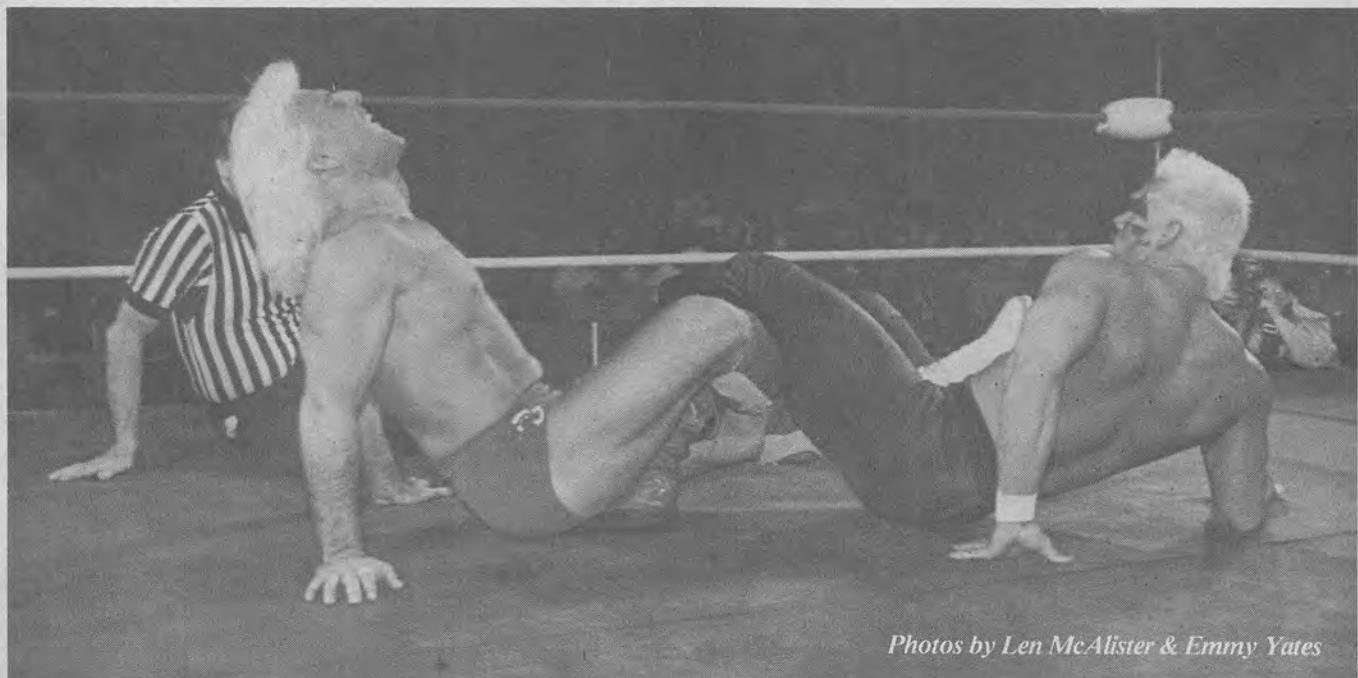
Flair is so good that opponents are often happy with a stalemate. Nearly 10 months after the Clash of the Champions battle, on New Year's Day at The Omni in Atlanta, Sting and Flair battled to a one-hour draw. Judging from Sting's reaction in the locker room after that match, you'd have thought he won the World title.

"The man's on the ropes and there's no getting away," Sting said.

(Continued on page 54)



Sting puts Flair in a side headlock (above) and catches the "Nature Boy" in a figure-four leglock (below). Although he hasn't won the World title yet, Sting is convinced he's a better wrestler than Flair, and is still eager to prove it.



Photos by Len McAlister & Emmy Yates

BULK HOG! WE LOVE ELLIOTT

Photos by David Fitzgerald



RANDY ADMITS: "I LOVE ELIZABETH!" *

Randy Savage loves Elizabeth. Hulk Hogan loves Elizabeth, too, although not the way the "Macho Man" thinks he loves her. This misunderstanding between the WWF's two most popular wrestlers has caused an unmendable rift—and it's about to erupt into one of the greatest feuds ever!



By Bill Apter

HOW RANDY SAVAGE PERCEIVES HULK HOGAN

(*A two-line play*)

(The scene is an arena in Huntsville, Alabama. There is a large crowd of fans watching as a tall, muscular man with long hair, balding near the front, stands on a platform with a beautiful brunette, his manager. He has a look of intensity in his face and shows great interest as he listens to a conversation between two men—Hulk Hogan and Brother Love—who are standing beside him. There is tremendous tension and emotion in their steadily rising voices).

BROTHER LOVE: There is no love in the air between Hulk Hogan, Randy Savage, and Elizabeth.

HULK HOGAN: I love Elizabeth . . .
(Fade to black.)

PARANOIA, THY NAME is Randy "Macho Man" Savage. Insensitivity, thy name is Hulk Hogan. How else can one explain the bad feelings that have surfaced between the WWF World champion and the former champion over the past several months?

Savage, a jealous man who is overprotective of his lovely manager, Elizabeth, hears only what he wants to hear. When Hogan said, "I love Elizabeth like a sister," all Savage's jealous ears heard was, "I

(Continued on page 62)

* **Like A Sister**

RICK STEINER

WRESTLING'S NEW DUSTY RHODES!

*Rick Steiner and
Dusty Rhodes are as
far apart in
appearance as
possible, but they
have much in
common. The
“American Dream”
has left the NWA,
but his legacy lives
on. Now, the
“Dogfaced Gremlin”
is carrying the torch
of Dusty’s NWA
campaigns!*

By Craig Peters

THEY DON'T WALK alike, they don't talk alike, and they *definitely* don't look alike. One's short and muscular with dark hair; the other is taller and chubbier with platinum blond hair. They don't even wrestle alike: One has a strong amateur background and depends on a scientific attack; the other is one of the greatest brawlers in history.

"So, *Inside Wrestling*," you might ask, "what's the story? How the heck can Rick Steiner be wrestling's new Dusty Rhodes? These guys are about as different as pumpernickel and white bread!"

To which we'd reply: "We agree." As far as appearance and wrestling styles are concerned, Rhodes and Steiner are on opposite ends of the

spectrum. But their careers have followed similar paths. And now that Rhodes has chosen to leave the NWA and continue his career in Florida, somebody has to fill his place. Steiner is both fortunate and unfortunate to be that somebody.

Their career similarities are startling. Rhodes started off as a rulebreaker in 1969 and teamed with Dick Murdoch

as The Outlaws. Rhodes and Murdoch stayed together for three years before Dusty devoted his attention to singles wrestling. He then found himself under the guidance of Gary Hart in a stable that included Pak Song, Dick Slater, Toru Tanaka, and The Mongolian Stomper—an evil crew, to say the least.

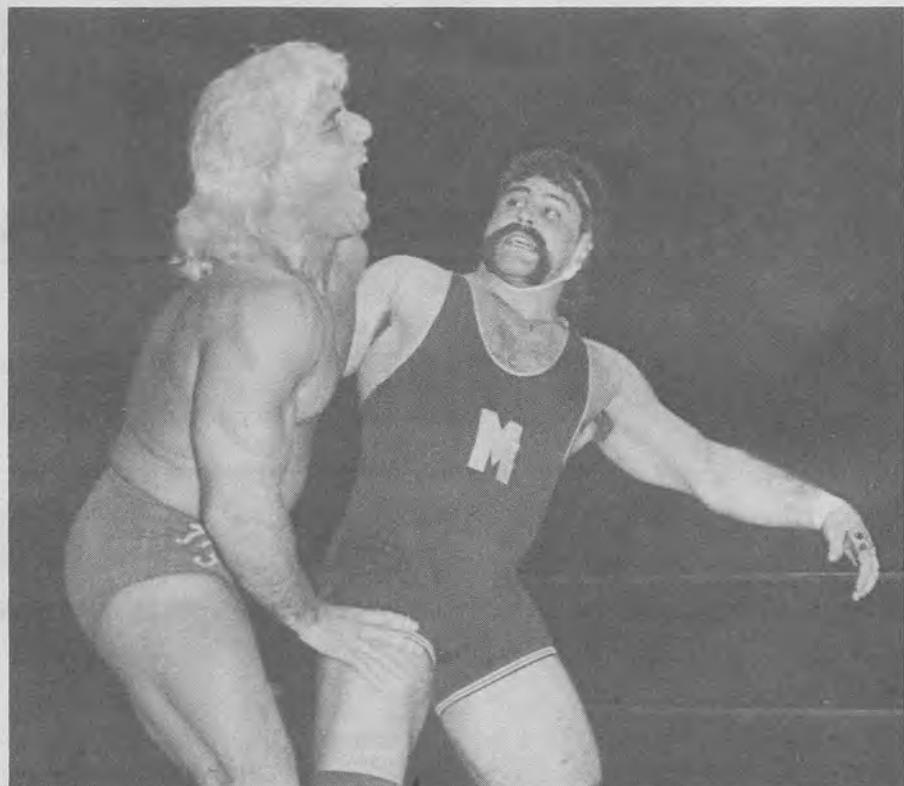
But in 1974, Rhodes' attitude changed. After a match against Mike Graham in which Hart and Pak Song ran into the ring and double-teamed Graham, Rhodes recalled the words of his former ditch-digging friend T.C. Lee and decided to devote his life to the American dream; hence, his famous nickname. Ever since then, Dusty's been one of the most popular men in the sport.

Some 15 years from now, people might be shocked to learn that Steiner was once a rulebreaker, just as it's still surprising to recall how Rhodes started out. In 1986, Steiner began his career by teaming with Buzz Sawyer, then broke with Sawyer and joined Eddie Gilbert and Missy Hyatt's "Hot Stuff & Hyatt Inc." He teamed with Gilbert and Sting and also worked on advancing his career as a singles wrestler.

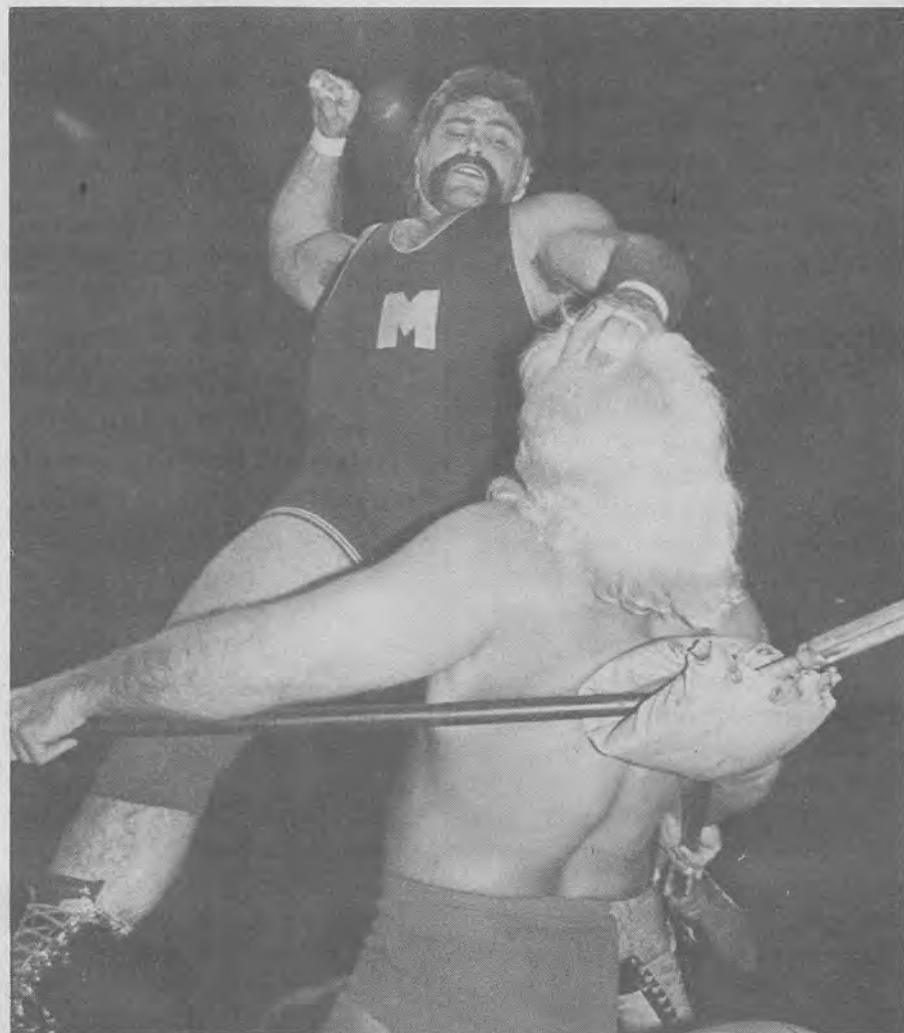
In early 1988, Steiner came to the NWA and, along with Mike Rotundo, was recruited by Kevin Sullivan to form The Varsity Club. But late last year, things began to change. Tension grew between Steiner and his Club teammates. Finally, in November, after months of abuse, Steiner decided to ditch Sullivan and Rotundo and go out on his own. Now that he's the archrival of the hated Rotundo and Sullivan, Steiner is one of the most popular men in the sport.

Of course, being popular is not always a blessing in wrestling. It makes a man the target of every nefarious organization in the sport. Rhodes knows this. It is something he has experienced his entire career. Since 1974, he has had to fight off nearly every rule-breaker that has entered the NWA, ranging from Dory Funk Jr., Harley Race, Pak Song, and Terry Funk to Tully Blanchard, Ric Flair, J.J. Dillon,

(Continued on page 58)



Rick Steiner goes for the hiptoss on Ric Flair (above) and pummels the NWA World champion on the turnbuckle (below). Like Dusty Rhodes, Steiner has given Flair some tough bouts, but Steiner and Rhodes have a lot more in common than that.



HOTSEAT

RICK MORTON

"TOO BAD IF THE FANS DON'T UNDERSTAND!"

IMAGINE RICK MORTON, for years one of the sport's most popular performers, turning against Jerry Lawler, one of his closest friends. Imagine Morton making one-sided decisions while refereeing a championship match. Imagine Morton turning his back on his fans.

Don't imagine; it's true. During one incredible night, Morton became one of the most hated men in the CWA, the area where he and Robert Gibson launched their legendary Rock 'n' Roll Express tag team. Here's how it happened:

Morton was assigned to referee a match between combined AWA/World Class champion Lawler and Dutch Mantel January 10 at Memphis' Mid-South Coliseum. Mantel protested, claiming Morton was Lawler's friend. But Morton seemed to do an impartial job during the match—until he was knocked out in a collision.

Suddenly, Morton was anything but fair—he began openly siding with Mantel. Morton ignored "The King's" foot on the bottom rope during the final pinfall, giving the victory—and the titles—to Mantel. After the match, Lawler ran to the dressing room, where he found Mantel and Morton together—with Morton holding a large sum of money! Did Morton take a bribe from "Dirty" Dutch?

Although CWA officials overturned the decision, Morton's actions became the talk of the wrestling world. Has he really turned for the worse? We sent Associate Editor David Rosenbaum to Memphis to find out.

Q: Rick, I just can't believe all the stories I've heard about the Lawler-Mantel title match. You've been very cooperative with our magazines in the past, so I'm hoping I

“
I've got something to prove right now. I'm out to show everybody that I'm one of the greatest singles wrestlers, not just half of a great tag team.
”

can get some straight answers out of you.

A: Sure, Davey baby, sure. Actually, there's not that much going on around here. Well, now that that's finished, what do you say we go and get us some eats?

Q: Wait a minute, Rick. I didn't fly halfway across the country to do a

one-question interview!

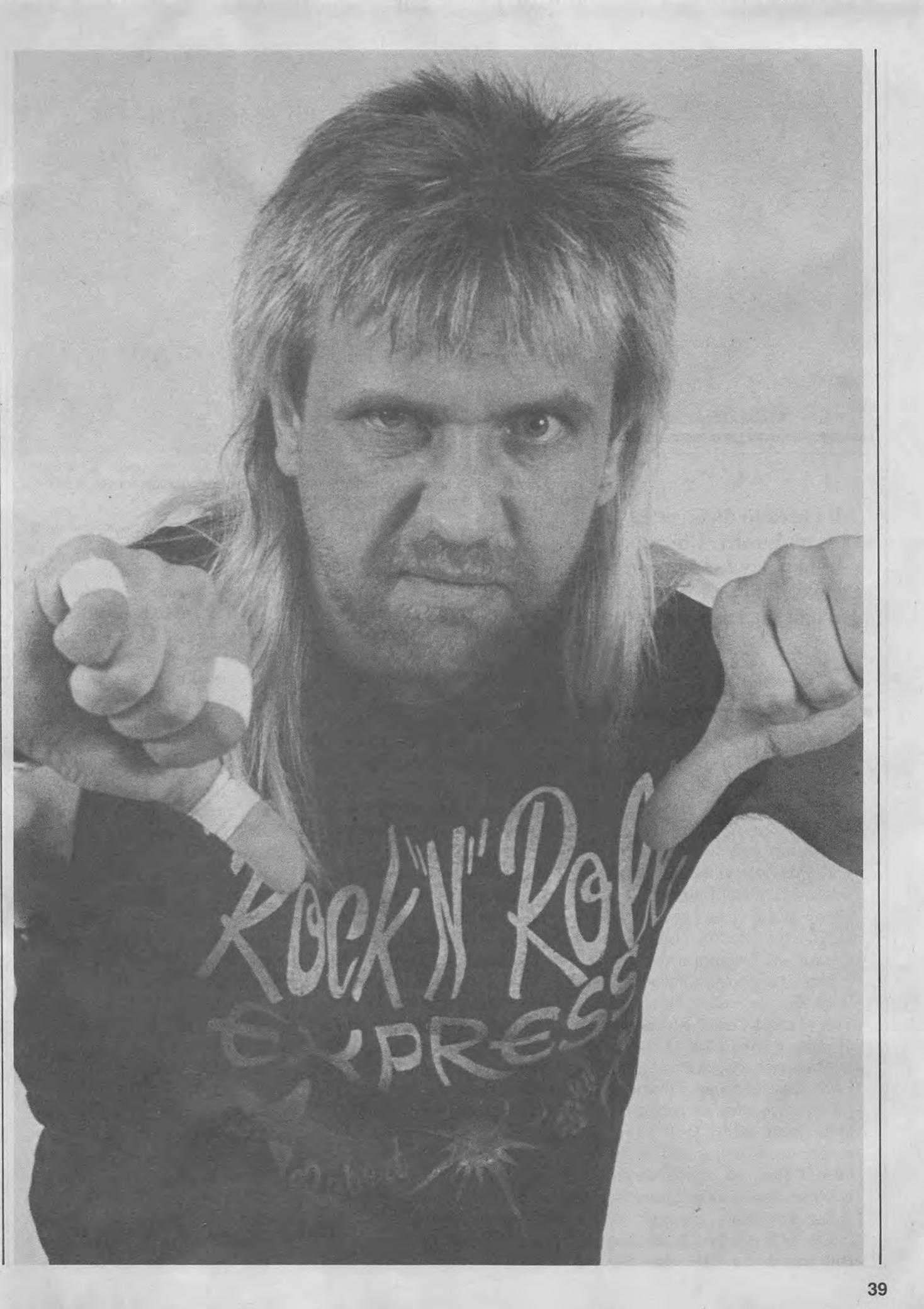
A: So ask questions that make sense, then! I'm too busy to waste my time these days, so let's get this thing over with.

Q: Since you put it that way, I'll put it to you in plain language. Did you take a bribe from Dutch Mantel to unfairly give him the victory for the AWA World and World Class titles against Jerry Lawler?

A: Absolutely not, Dave. You've got a lot of nerve asking me a question like that. I'm surprised that a man of your supposed intelligence is dumb enough to even bring the subject up. What do I need Dutch Mantel's money for?

Q: I don't know, but when Lawler ran into the dressing room, Mantel was patting you on the back while you were counting a huge mound of cash. That sure seems like some sort of a payoff to me!

A: Hey, I was just counting my purse from my earlier tag match with Jeff Jarrett, all right? What's the big deal, anyway? I refereed that match fair and square, and I called it evenly for both of those guys. I didn't really expect Mantel to win, but he pinned Jerry clean in the center of the ring. I've got to hand it to the ol' boy. Mantel beat Lawler like a true champion





“

All I need to do is get my hands on Lawler. I'm gonna make him pay for all the lies he's told. I'll prove he hasn't got half the talent I have.

”

should.

Q: I don't believe that. During the match, you prevented Lawler from hitting Mantel several times. In the end, Jerry had his foot over the bottom rope right in front of you when you counted him out! The worst part of it all is that you and Mantel ganged up on Lawler in the locker room after the match! I'm shocked and saddened about your suddenly mean-spirited attitude,

A: What did you expect me to do? That so-called "King" accused me of taking a bribe. I had to hit him just to protect my reputation. You know, a lot of people I thought I trusted around here are turning out to be pretty shady. First, Lawler accuses me of getting paid off by Mantel. Then, the referees around here start discriminating against me during my singles matches. The capper of it all, though, is these fans around here. How dare they



Rick Morton referees a title match between Dutch Mantel and Jerry Lawler. CWA matchmaker Randy Hales chose Morton after Mantel couldn't decide whom he wanted to officiate. Mantel originally didn't want Morton either, but he had no choice.

boo me after all I've done for them over the years!

Q: Why shouldn't they be upset? If it wasn't for the CWA officials, you would have unfairly taken the titles away from Lawler. And from what I've seen, you've been wrestling with uncommon aggressiveness in your singles matches lately.

A: Why shouldn't I wrestle aggressively? With a man like Lawler as World champion, I'm just doing what I have to do. Look at what Mantel had to go through to get his title matches. Mantel was a perfect gentleman, asking Lawler for championship bouts for weeks. Every time, that coward Lawler turned him down. Finally, Dutch wised up and slapped Lawler in his face right on TV. All of a sudden, that lyin' Lawler immediately granted Mantel a match! Frankly, I don't want to go through all that crap. I decided I was going to get tough and get a title shot on my own, without having to come beggin' Lawler for anything.

Q: Why this sudden hostility toward Lawler? He's been one of the biggest supporters of The Rock 'n' Roll Express for years.

A: That's bull. That bum has been taking credit for The Rock 'n' Roll Express for years. As you know,

Lawler always goes around bragging that he was the founder of the Express, he says he got me and Gibson together all those years ago, blah, blah, blah. He's full of it. Lawler's got to have the biggest ego of anybody I've ever met. The only people that should get credit for the Rock 'n' Rolls is me and Robbie. True, Lawler was around when we were just gettin' started, and we even tagged with him a few times. But that doesn't make him our mentor or anything like that. He's got nothing to do with our success at all, and he's got no right to be shootin' off his big mouth like that. It's an insult.

Q: Speaking of your tag team, I notice that you're wrestling alone here in the CWA . . .

A: So what?

Q: . . . while you're still teaming with Robert in the new Atlantic Coast federation and in other areas. Why isn't Robert teaming with you all the time?

A: I never realized what a nosy son of a gun you were until now, Rosenbaum. You also have a memory like swiss cheese. Back in 1986, I almost won the NWA World title from Ric Flair. Sure, I got pounded up pretty good since I was smaller than he was, but I



As Lawler lies flat on his back, Morton and Mantel have words (above). Morton pushes Lawler's foot off the ropes as Mantel has him covered (below). Morton shocked everyone by being biased toward Mantel, the eventual winner.



gave Ric some of the toughest matches he's ever had. Now, I want a chance at Lawler, so I'm wrestling alone here while I'm still teaming with Robert in the ACW. So what's wrong with that?

Q: Well, nothing, but . . .

A: But what, Rosenbaum? You know, I've had to put up with your crap for a long time. The Rock 'n' Roll Express has been the most popular tag team in the world for years, we've been four-time World tag team champions, but we've never gotten the credit we've deserved. It seems to me you wrote a pretty nasty column about our fans about two years ago.

Q: Sure, but I was expressing my opinion about your *fan club*, not you and Robert.

A: That don't matter. *Nobody's* got the right to put down anything I've ever done, Jack. Now, I'm gonna take my frustrations out on people like Lawler, who shoots off his big yap a little bit too much—and I'll take both those belts from him as part of the bargain.

Q: You're very ambitious, but I wonder how far you'll go now that most of the CWA fans have turned against you. You've always been known as someone who has relied on fan support during your matches. Do you think you can really defeat Lawler without the fans cheering you on?

A: A man's gotta do what he's gotta do, Rosenbaum, and too bad if the fans don't understand. I've got something to prove right now. I'm



“
Lawler always goes around bragging that he was the founder of the Express. He's full of it. He's got nothing to do with our success at all.

”

out to show everybody that I'm one of the world's greatest singles wrestlers, not just half of a great tag team. I figure that the AWA and World Class belts are a pretty good place to start. Wendell Cooley better watch out, or I'll grab that CWA title, too. Nothing's gonna stop me the way I feel now.

Q: I've never seen a man whose attitude has changed as suddenly as yours has. I'm really starting to worry about you, Rick.

A: Keep your feelings to yourself, Rosenbaum. I don't need your support, either. All I need is to get my hands on Lawler. I'm gonna make him pay for all the lies he's told. I'll prove he hasn't got half the talent that I have. And who knows? Maybe Robbie will come help me, and then we'll *really* clean house. The CWA's gonna know that The Rock 'n' Roll Express is stronger than ever, Jack! □

Wrestling's Unhappiest World champions:

BAD

Photos by Brad McFarlin

Pat Tanaka slugs Rick Morton. Tanaka and Paul Diamond want to face top competition every night.

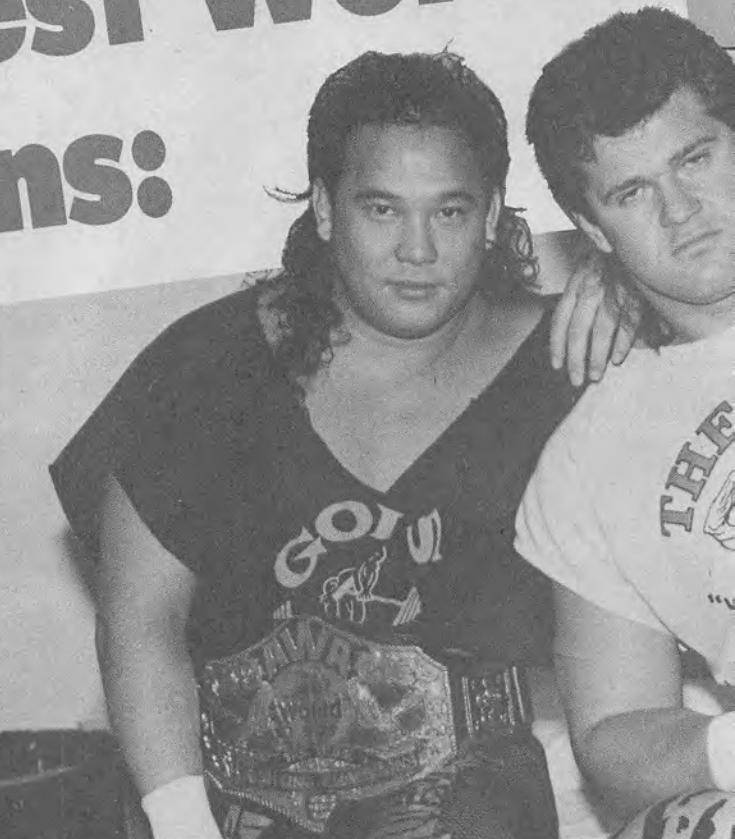


By Andy Rodriguez

ACCORDING TO SOME, world champions have the world at their feet. They are recognized as the best athletes in their sport, and therefore are entitled to the very best of everything.

AWA World tag team champions Bad Company, Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond, think they deserve the best that life has to offer. They recently defeated the team of Rick Morton and John Paul in Las Vegas. The spoils of their victory? A title defense against Mando and Chavo Guerrero at the subsequent Showboat card.

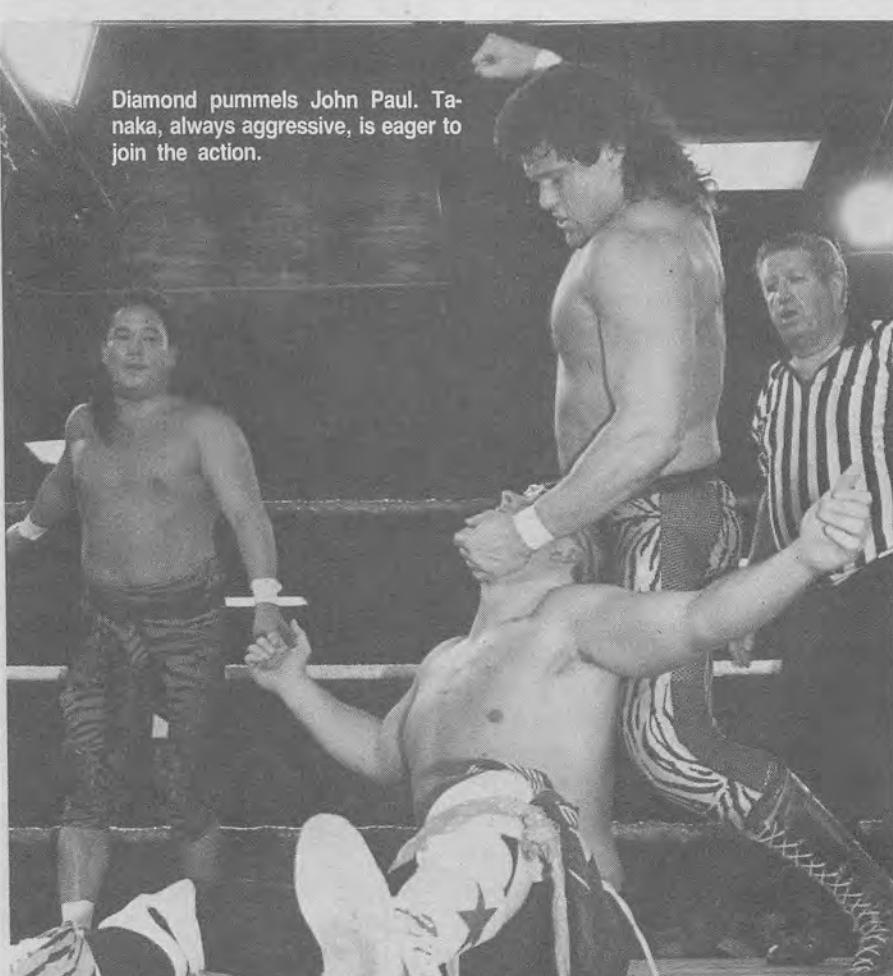
"Why aren't we getting better competition?" barked Bad Company's manager, Diamond Dallas Page, accompanied as usual by a



DAYS FOR BAD COMPANY



Pat Tanaka and Paul Diamond have been AWA World tag team champions for nearly a year, but just holding the belts isn't good enough for them. They swear that unless the AWA bows to their demands, people—especially their opponents—will pay!



pair of curvaceous Diamond Dolls. "It's always the Guerreros and The Top Guns. If it's not, it's a couple of bums like we beat tonight. Hey—a title reign is only as good as the contenders we destroy. Eleven months as champions, and all we have to show for it are a couple of tarnished old belts. I've got two unhappy champions on my hands. Very unhappy. And so am I."

Indeed, these are bad days for Bad Company, and they're coming at a time when they *should* be celebrating. If they're still undefeated on March 19, they will celebrate their first anniversary as AWA tag team champions. It's a feat not many modern tag teams accomplish, but it's not nearly good enough for this duo.

"The same opponents, the same

arenas, the same results," complained Tanaka. "At SuperClash III, we should have been part of the main event. Instead, we got buried on the undercard teaming

with that bimbo Madusa Miceli. It's not enough of a showcase for men of our superior caliber."

Apparently, success has gone to the heads of Tanaka and Diamond.

They see themselves as equals to the NWA and WWF World tag champions, The Road Warriors and Demolition, respectively. And they don't believe they've gotten enough credit—or enough money—for being AWA champions.

They're even threatening to walk away from the AWA—and their World title!

"There was a stretch recently when we went two straight weeks without wrestling at all," complained Tanaka. "I don't give a damn if the AWA didn't schedule cards because of SuperClash. That doesn't do my pocketbook much good, does it? Then, when we finally get back to action, we have to get our hands all greasy with those Guerreros again. Is this what being a champion is all about? I'll bet the other world champions don't have these problems."

After weeks of hearing complaints from his tag team, Page decided to do something about their plight. Acknowledged as one of the shrewdest businessmen in the sport, Page drew up an explicit list of demands for his men and presented it to AWA President Stanley Blackburn.

"It's time for the AWA to wise up," claims Page. "In addition to our financial demands, there are several other items we *must* have in 1989. Failure to meet these ultimatums could result in my men taking their frustrations out on these untalented fools they keep throwing against us."

One of Page's demands is that the other Bad Company, Stampede's Brian Pillman and Bruce Hart, be imported to the AWA for a battle for the exclusive right to the name, similar to what is going on currently in the NWA with the two Midnight Express teams.

"We're the *real* Bad Company," seethed Tanaka. "Those Canuck buffoons stole the name from us. As World champions, they should come down here to meet us, too. No way I'm freezing my butt off in



Tanaka slams John Paul on the arena floor (above). Morton smashes Tanaka's face into the mat with a running DDT (below).



Calgary; we're demanding that we wrestle to settle the score once and for all."

Page also wants to petition all other current tag team champions for belt vs. belt matches, similar to the ambitious AWA World title defense schedule set up by Jerry Lawler last year.

"Don't get me wrong," insisted Diamond. "I hate Lawler as much as anybody. But when he began traveling around the world defending his belt, he became one of the most in-demand personalities in sports. *That's* the kind of influence I want to have. We're better wrestlers than Lawler anyway. We want the kind of schedule that lives up to our greatness."

Unfortunately for Bad Company, their current schedule is good enough for Blackburn. When he received Page's list of demands, the administrator claims he read the notice very carefully . . .

"Then I placed it in the circular file," laughed Blackburn, pointing at his wastebasket. "Tanaka and Diamond should know from what happened to Lawler that I'm in no mood to listen to demands from anyone. Bad Company will meet the opponents we tell them to, at the times we tell them to. That's all I have to say on this matter."

After failing to hear from Blackburn, Tanaka and Diamond have decided to let their actions talk for them. On January 7 in Las Vegas, Bad Company successfully defended their belts against Mando and Chavo Guerrero, but that only tells half the story. Tanaka and Diamond fought like caged animals. It was apparent to the fans at The Showboat that Bad Company is in a bad mood—a *very* bad mood.

"We're not finished yet, either," warns Page. "Blackburn wants to ignore his greatest champions? Fine. We'll take it out on the skulls of everybody we meet until we get what we want. We'll make sure that none of these contenders survive. That way, the AWA has to bow to our needs."

From now on, Tanaka and Diamond want only the best that life as champions has to offer. Unfortunately, they're going to try to cripple everyone they meet until they get what they want.

It's not a happy scenario for anybody. □

BACK ISSUES OF



Complete your collection of **PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED**. Don't miss out on the excellence that has made PWI the leader in wrestling journalism. PLUS—Each issue contains a giant FULL-COLOR poster of one of your favorite wrestling stars. Quantities limited—order today! [NOTE: Cover stories noted in **BOLDFACE**.]

June 1982/COLOR PINUP: Nick Bockwinkel, Adonis & Ventura, Snuka, Patera, Flair.

August 1982/COLOR PINUP: Dino Bravo, Steamboat & Rich, Andre, Martel, Piper, Blassie.

January 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ken Patera, Rick Steamboat, Rich, Brody, Sullivan, Backlund.

February 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Putski, Rhodes vs. Garvin, Snuka, Super Destroyer, Bockwinkel, Funk.

April 1983/COLOR PINUP: Superstar Graham, Mil Mascaras, Valentine, Ornoff, Hart.

June 1983/COLOR PINUP: Cowboy Bob Orton, Rick Martel, Von Erich, Slaughter, Muraco.

July 1983/COLOR PINUP: Ivan Koloff, Tommy Rich, Patera, Von Erich, Snuka.

August 1983/COLOR PINUP: Larry Zbysko, Roddy Piper, Sullivan, Zbysko, Von Erich, Wrestling II.

October 1983/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Tommy Rich, Johnson, Adonis, Rhodes, Piper.

November 1983/COLOR PINUP: Roddy Piper, Harley Race, Santana, Mascaras, Ellering, Valiant, Race.

December 1983/COLOR PINUP: Wahoo McDaniel, Dusty Rhodes, Hayes, Steamboat, Hansen, DiBiase.

January 1984/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race, Rick Martel, Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Sunshine, Greg Valentine, Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

June 1984/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater, Ted DiBiase, Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering, Jimmy Valiant, JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen, Jerry Lawler, Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack, Kerry Von Erich, Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel, Sgt. Slaughter, Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana, Road Warriors, Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A., Rick Martel, Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, Jimmy Snuka, Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham, Dusty Rhodes, Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter, Hogan vs. Piper, Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams, Rick Steamboat, Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage, Ric Flair, Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura, Great American Bash, Von Erich, Ornoff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hack-saw Duggan, Hulk Hogan, T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff, Mike Von Erich, Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair, Wendi Richter, Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat, Road Warriors, Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich, Hulk Hogan, Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy, R & R Express, Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

August 1986/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes, Randy Savage, Lugar vs. Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd, Nikita Koloff, Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll, British Bulldogs, Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

December 1986/COLOR PINUP: Great American Bash, Great American Bash, Midnight Rockers, Von Erich, Windham.

January 1987/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds, Roddy Piper, Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

February 1987/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth, UWF Tournament, T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Ornoff.

April 1987/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger, Dusty & Nikita, DiBiase, DeBeers, Dinggo, WWF Housecleaning.



MAY 1987

May 1987/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams, Andre-Hogan, UWF Tourney, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

June 1987/COLOR PINUP: Hulk Hogan, Magnum T.A., Can-Ams, Warriors, Freebirds, Hall.

July 1987/COLOR PINUP: Midnight Rockers, Steamboat-Savage, Luger, Duggan, Garvins, Sting.

August 1987/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Precious, Hogan-Andre, Warriors, Windham-Flair, Gordy, Bigelow.

October 1987/COLOR PINUP: Ted DiBiase, Ric Flair, Williams, Rockers, Hogan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

November 1987/COLOR PINUP: George Steele, Nikita Koloff, Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

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The telephone wires sizzle every month as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. This is the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to see the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off . . . One on One

ONE OF WRESTLING'S most famous eras has come to an end. On January 24, Ric Flair announced that he had fired J.J. Dillon as his manager, thereby ending an association that had continued, off and on, for nearly an entire decade. This time, however, the split seems to be for keeps: Dillon has left the NWA.

The problems between Dillon and Flair started in early January with the announcement that Flair and Barry Windham, the two remaining members of The Four Horsemen, had signed to wrestle Eddie Gilbert and a mystery partner on January 18 in Atlanta. The mystery partner, as it turned out, was Rick Steamboat, newly out of retirement; Steamboat pinned Flair.

The World champion was irate. Flair felt that Dillon should have known in advance who Gilbert's partner would be, and that he should have prevented the NWA from allowing anyone to put his name on a match contract as "Mr. X." It was the kind of mistake Dillon rarely makes.

Dillon is one of the most successful managers in history. He managed Flair to two of his five World titles, Windham and Lex Luger to U.S. titles, and Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson to a pair of World tag team championships. He is a three-time Manager of the Year, and has had steady impact on the sport.

But now it's over, a fact the editors of *Inside Wrestling* took full account of when we contacted Flair and Dillon to square off . . . "One on One."

ONE O



"You've been an albatross around my neck for years! Who needs you? Certainly I don't. I'm the greatest wrestler this sport has ever known!"

—Ric Flair

RIC FLAIR:

Listen up, J.J., I said just about everything I had to say to you when I said "You're fired," and I meant what I said. You're history, pal! You're yesterday's news!

J.J. DILLON:

That's right, buddy, I'm history, yesterday's news. The way I see it, the future is now for James J. Dillon, and I'm ready to head for greener pastures. I've had enough of your excuses and your losing ways, Ric. For years, I protected you. I'm the reason why you've been able to hold onto that belt for so long, but now I'm gone. Let's see how you get along without me, champ.

RF: Get along without you? I'm Ric Flair! I'm the World champion! Five times, pal, five times NWA World heavyweight champion!

Anybody wants to be the man, they have to beat the man, and I am the man! I don't need your protection, I don't need anybody's protection. I need me, and that's it.

JJ: Then let me refresh your memory, Ricky boy. July 10, Baltimore, Maryland, I believe, Luger had you on the ropes, but I was right there with a handy chair to help you out. And how about all those other times and I was right there with my shoe or a helping hand? I stood by you all those years while you boasted about being the greatest this, the greatest that, but all along I knew that I was the only reason why you were on top. I was just man enough to let you take the credit. Now you find yourself helpless against Steamboat, so you blame me. Well,

V ONE



"I've had enough of your excuses and losing ways, Ric. For years, I protected you. I'm the reason you've been able to hold on to that belt for so long."

—J.J. Dillon

buddy, if you wanna know who's to blame, just look in the mirror.

RF: What? You're . . . you . . . you're to blame for that blue-collar slug Ronnie Garvin stealing my belt, you were to blame when Lex Luger lost the U.S. title to Dusty Rhodes, you cost the Horsemen the World tag team belts, you had no idea about Steamboat, you've been an albatross around my neck for years! Who needs you? Nobody! Certainly I don't need you! I'm the greatest wrestler this sport has ever known!

JJ: Getting a little unraveled, hey, Ricky boy? What happened to the calm, cool, collected champion? Getting nervous because your savior isn't gonna be around to help anymore? All I know, Ric, is that I'm proud of what I've accomplished as a manager. I'm talkin'

about two World tag team championships for Tully and Arn, U.S. championships for Luger and Windham, and even two World championships for you. Don't tell me how they lost them; all I know is that I was there when everybody won them.

RF: You've got a lot of damn nerve, Dillon! You're trying to take the credit for everything! You stroll around ringside while I'm busting my butt wrestling, competing, and sweating for 60 minutes, then you want to be acknowledged as the man who won the titles? No work and all glory? Step through those ropes against me, pal, and you'd find your back pinned to the mat after 10 seconds, even if I had both hands and both legs tied behind my back and my eyes blindfolded! You've got no class, Dil-

lon, and you've been riding on the coattails of my stylin' and profilin' for too long.

JJ: Will you just listen to the obnoxious jock? Let's get the roles straight here, buddy: *you* were the wrestler, *I* was the manager. *I* didn't have to win the titles; that was *your* job, although it seemed it became my job far too often. When I was a wrestler, I wrestled and never blamed anybody for what happened to me. I would hope that at this stage of the game, you could beat me in the ring, but one day, you're gonna have to hang it up. When that happens, you'll see that you don't have the mind to be the greatest manager of all time, like I am. You're nothing by yourself, Ric, just a lot of glitz. Let's not forget who's been riding on whose coattails.

RF: I was NWA World champion long before I took you under my wing, and I'll be NWA World champion long after you're gone. Our business association is a closed chapter, but the best portion of the book is yet to come. It's gonna be a long, long time before *this* champion has to hang up the boots, and when I do, it's going to be as an undefeated World champion. And I sure as hell don't need *your* help to maintain my position as *the* greatest NWA World champion the sport has ever seen.

JJ: Go ahead, Ric, but you're only kidding yourself. I saw the way Steamboat handled you. You're like putty in his hands. That guy might've been on the sidelines for a while, but he's ready to take you over. You know, Ric, you're right: If I had known Steamboat was Mr. X, I never would've let you sign that contract. There's no way I would've thrown you to the wolves on my watch, but so much for that. He's got your number, and the only person who could save you, the only person with the secret to beating Rick Steamboat—me!—is gone. You're on your own, Ric. Good riddance.

RF: On my own is the way I like it, especially if being with you is the alternative. Steamboat couldn't beat me five years ago, and he can't beat me today. I'm still the greatest world champion ever. *Whooooooo!* □

SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 7)

just can't do it. Obviously, the guy doesn't have the talent and knowhow Windham and Flair possess. If Sting survives the beating the Horsemen will continue to give him, he still has the Warriors to deal with.

Don't get me wrong. I am not and have never been a fan of the Warriors. But for Sting to think he and whatever pathetic partner he can find can stop the Warriors is totally ridiculous. This guy is suffering from delusions, and so are the fans if they actually believe this babbling fool!

So, Sting had best prepare himself for the end. If the Warriors, Flair, and Windham don't do him in, Sting will end his own career by taking on more than he can handle.

1989 is going to be fun . . . unless you're a Sting fan, of course!

KAY FRARY
Alpena, MI

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A GOLDEN TOUCH

If J.J. Dillon is looking for a replacement for Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard, I think he should consider Robert Fuller and Jimmy Golden. They would make a perfect addition to the Horsemen. They're cut from the same mold as Tully and Arn: no-nonsense wrestlers who blend science and rulebreaking and have much experience as a tag team.

Fuller and Golden are a much better team than people give them credit for. Remember, they dominated the tag team scene in the Continental area for over a year. I can't think of a better combination for the Horsemen.

SHELBY LAMBERT
Edmond, OK

LOSE IT, DUSTY

Dusty Rhodes: The American Dream? Maybe so—if you spend all night dreaming about cherry pie, triple-layer cakes, southern-fried chicken, and other fattening foods. The real truth is that Dusty is the male answer

to the circus fat lady! Those layers of fat make him look more like a hog being taken to slaughter than a professional wrestler.

Don't get me wrong. I've always loved and admired Dusty's great ability within the squared circle. I'm just saying what female wrestling fans have been thinking for years: Dusty, *please* lose some of the fat.

I recently saw Dusty's son Dustin and thought how nice looking he is; Dusty was once just as handsome. In fact, I once thought Dusty was the sexiest man in the world of sports. That includes not only wrestling, but football, baseball, and basketball. Those eyes were the most brilliant I've seen. A girl could drown in the emotion they contain.

But the fat has ruined all that potential. Come on, Dusty, give us girls a thrill! We aren't asking you to become a beanpole. If that extra weight was converted to muscle, you wouldn't have to work so hard to keep up your

(Continued on page 50)



Robert Fuller is about to join Jimmy Golden in beating Jeff Jarrett. If the Horsemen need replacements, they should consider Fuller and Golden, writes Shelby Lambert.

THIS MONTH IN...



The Wrestler



Who's better: **RICK STEAMBOAT**—Champion or **RICK STEAMBOAT**—Challenger?



RANDY SAVAGE and **HULK HOGAN**—Ready to rumble!

PLUS . . .

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All this and much more . . . in the May 1989 issue of *The Wrestler*

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All this and much more . . . in the May 1989 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated*

ON SALE NOW!

SINCERELY YOURS

(Continued from page 48)

stamina. Lose a few pounds and you'll be healthier, happier, and sexier. With Dustin at your side, you could become the world's sexiest tag team.

PATTIE LaRUE
August, AK

DREAMS AND SCHEMES

I consider myself one of the biggest fans of professional wrestling in the midwest. I feel I can speak for a lot of fans, and would like to make just a few comments:

- World Class, the AWA, and the CWA should be commended for breaking an unwritten rule. They have successfully completed an interfederation card, SuperClash III. Maybe someday the fans will get their wish and see a tournament with Ric Flair, Randy Savage, Jerry Lawler, and Kerry Von Erich—or whoever the big four are—to unify a *real* world title.

- As an alternative to pay-per-view TV, one of the big federations should hook up with HBO or Showtime so

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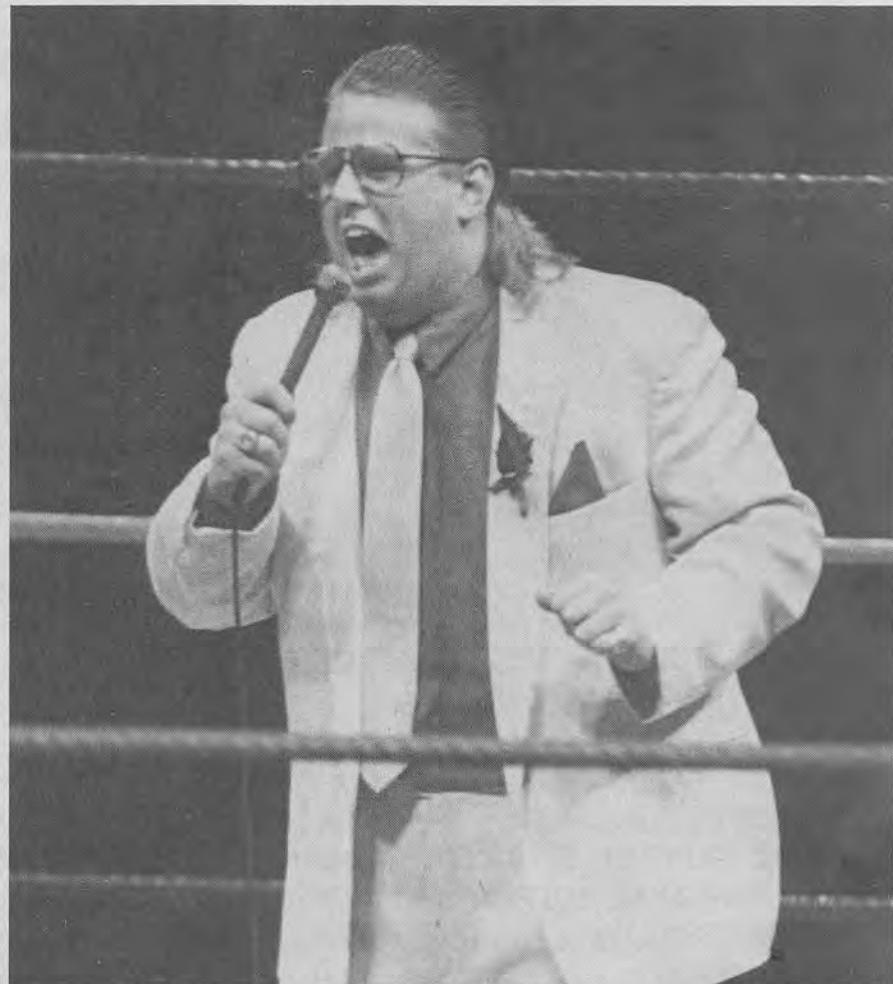
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Brother Love is one more reason why the WWF is such a circus, in reader Andy Seeley's opinion. He prefers the competition in the NWA, but would like to see it expand.

- The NWA, easily the best federation in wrestling, needs to expand and come to places such as Omaha, Des Moines, and Kansas City more often so the fans can see some better competition than the circus of dogs, birds, snakes, and Brother Loves we get stuck with in the WWF.

- more fans can see the big shows.

- Titles: the WWF needs an Intercontinental tag team championship and a junior heavyweight title. The NWA needs two less; lose the Florida and Western States Heritage titles.

ANDY SEELEY
Milford, NE □

BACK ISSUES OF



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February 1981/Stories include: Zbyszko, Patera, Iron Sheik, Wrestling II.

March 1981/Stories include: Rich, Samoans, Blassie, Wrestling II.

May 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, DiBiase, Moondogs.

June 1981/Stories include: Sammartino, Piper, Rich, Martel.

July 1981/Stories include: Backlund, Rhodes, Flair, Atlas.

August 1981/Stories include: DiBiase, Slaughter, Martel, Idol.

October 1981/Stories include: Funks, Rhodes, Race, Sullivan.

January 1982/Stories include: Rich, Steamboat, Sullivan, Sammartino.

March 1982/Stories include: Slaughter, Albano, Flair, Race.

April 1982/Stories include: Brisco, Armstrongs, Valentine, Santana.

May 1982/Stories include: Backlund, Von Erich, Graham, Rich.

June 1982/Stories include: Steamboat, Reed, Albano, Piper.

July 1982/Stories include: Rich, Sawyer, Flair, Steamboat.

August 1982/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Steamboat, Mulligans, Piper.

September 1982/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, Armstrong, Blair.

October 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rhodes, Santana, Piper.

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include:

Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Macarac, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

October 1984/Stories include: Flair, Rhodes, Magnum T.A., Bundy.

November 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Von Erich, Piper, Brody.

December 1984/Stories include: Martel, Santana, Von Erich, Steamboat.

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

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June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Ondorf, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.

September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.

November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Ondorf, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvin, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.

July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.

August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.

September 1987/Stories include: Koloff, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.

October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerry.

November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.

January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.

February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.

April 1988/Special Issue! Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class. Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.

May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.

June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.

July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Windham-Luger split, Demolition, Lawler, Ellering.

September 1988/Stories include: Duggan vs. Andre, Hogan, Windham.

October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.

November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.

January 1989/Stories include: Kevin Von, Rougeaus, Horsemen, Hogan.

February 1989/Stories include: Warriors, Ultimate-Hogan, Bigelow-Gordy.

March 1989/Stories include: Jarrett, Flair, Jake-Andre, Bigelow-Windham.

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DRESSING ROOM DOOR

(Continued from page 10)

a minute and managed to cause Bossman's elimination.

Hogan was fighting a losing battle the whole time, because the Rumble format made it almost impossible for him to win. This year's Rumble was increased to 30 participants from last year's 20. The match started with Demolition Smash going one-on-one against partner Ax. Then, every two minutes, another wrestler entered the ring. Numbers were drawn before the match, so it could've been a fan favorite or rulebreaker. Nobody knew who would be the next man into the ring. Wrestlers could only be eliminated by being thrown over the top rope.

Hogan was the 18th man into the ring at 32:05. To have won, he would've had to survive another 32 minutes of absolutely grueling action. It's no coincidence that Hacksaw Duggan, the '88 winner, was the 13th man out of 20 to enter the ring; this year's winner, John Studd, was the 27th of 30.

Some might call this unfair, but the luck of the draw is a factor in many sports. The draw for numbers is much like the draw for post positions in horse racing: the inside posts have an advantage over the outside posts. In auto racing, the cars that start in the front have a huge advantage over the cars that start in the back. Unless the race is going to be held on a straight track, there's no getting around this.

In the Royal Rumble, unless all 30 men enter the ring at the same time, there's no way for everyone to have an equal chance. But if all 30 men are in the ring at the same time, it's no longer a Royal Rumble: It's just an ordinary battle royal. The Royal Rumble is one of the best events of the year, and there's no reason to change a good thing.



Demolition Ax and Curt Hennig struggle to eliminate Andre the Giant at the Royal Rumble. In Dave Rosenbaum's opinion, Hennig turned in an outstanding performance.

It's unfair, however, to recognize only the winner, because by no means did Studd turn in this year's best performance. There were several notable—and better—efforts:

- Curt Hennig. Lasted for 28 minutes and 25 seconds, giving him the 1989 Royal Rumble Longevity Award. Hennig was the fourth man in at 4:00 and was eliminated by Hogan at 32:25. Along the way, Hennig eliminated both members of Demolition and held off a determined attack by Tito Santana. The most impressive aspect of Hennig's performance: Seven men who entered the ring after him were eliminated before him. Hennig reminded me of Bret Hart in last year's Rumble. Hart, who lasted an incredible 36 minutes last year, still holds the longevity record, but Hennig is a very close second. Curt is an outstanding scientific wrestler, but wrestling has little to do with the Rumble, a true test of survival. Hennig showed incredible stamina and proved he can brawl with the best.

- Akeem. Eliminated two men in 19 minutes and 21 seconds and showed stamina I never thought he had. Akeem teamed with Bossman to eliminate Hogan and was finally dumped at 62:55 by a fresh John Studd. This guy is one tough competitor; based on

Akeem's Rumble performance, I suspect the big man is being mishandled by manager Slick.

- Butch Miller. For those blind to any federation but the WWF, The Sheepherders were one of the toughest tag teams in the sport for many years. Miller and Luke Williams, now known as The Bushwhackers in the WWF, also are known for their ability to withstand incredible punishment for long periods of time. Miller was the Bushwhackers' star at the Rumble. He went 18 minutes and 30 seconds and never let up for an instant. And, as expected, Miller went after everyone. He's never been one to play favorites.

- Finally, Hogan. Superman is alive and well and living in the WWF. Hogan is obviously determined to return to championship form in '89, and he used the Rumble as his steppingstone. The bout is tailor-made for Hogan: His lack of wrestling ability doesn't hurt him; all he has to do is his brawl. The "Hulkster's" brute strength was simply too much for his overmatched opponents. This was one of the best performances of his career.

Now if Hogan would shut up and learn a few wrestling moves, who knows—he might actually turn out to be a worthy champion one day. □

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Wrestling

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September 1979/Flair-McDaniel, Garvin, Ladd, Rhodes.

February 1980/Rhodes-Funk, Race, Spoiler, Brisco.

May 1980/Koloff-Anderson, Brody-Spoiler, Graham, Andre.

October 1980/Hogan, Flair, Wrestling II, Super D.

January 1981/Morales-Fuji, Zbyszko, Thornton, Keirn.

June 1981/Morales-Khan, Lawler, Slater, Piper.

September 1981/Backlund-Mosca, Freebirds, Flair, Rich, Junkyard Dog.

November 1981/Rhodes-Dibiase, Steamboat, Mulligan, McDaniel, Spoiler.

December 1981/Muraco-Morales, Patera, Steele, Andre.

March 1982/Valentine, Brisco-Funk, Steele, Flair, Hayes.

April 1982/Spoiler, Idol-Hayes, Morales, Super D, Ladd.

May 1982/Rich-Flair, Backlund, Superstar, Dillon, Wrestling II.

June 1982/Tommy Rich, Jimmy Snuka, Wrestlers rate each other.

July 1982/Steamboat-Idol, Albano, Rhodes, Patera.

August 1982/Piper-Rich, Flair-Slater, Rhodes, Valentine, Bockwinkel.

October 1982/Funk-Abdullah, Orton, Kabuki, Von Erich.

November 1982/Piper, Abdullah, Saito, Von Erich, Mascaras.

December 1982/Backlund-Rose, Rhodes-Flair, Albano, Humperdinck.

January 1983/Rich, McDaniel-Valentine, Patera, Brisco, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Flair-Race, Morales-Rose, Patera, Bravo, Spoiler.

March 1983/Flair-Bass, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat, Patera.

April 1983/Backlund-Graham, Briscos, Rhodes, Hogan, Samoans.

May 1983/Muraco, Dillon, Sullivan, Reed, Brisco, Von Erich.

June 1983/Piper, Bockwinkel-Patterson, Brody, Sullivan, Baba.

July 1983/Valiant-Humperdinck, Martel, Hernandez, Murdoch, Armstrong.

October 1983/Martel-Valentine, Mulligan, Lawler, Von Erichs, Bruno.

November 1983/Andre-Mulligan, Kamala-Brody, Slater, Backlund.

December 1983/Windham-LeDuc, Santana, Sullivan, Garvin.

January 1984/Andre-Abdullah, Bockwinkel, Gilbert, Windham, Flair, Mosca.

February 1984/Rich-Sawyer, Idol-Hansen, Martel, Parsons, Von Erich.

March 1984/Starcade '83, Closeups on Atlanta and Dallas cards.

April 1984/Von Erich-Gordy, Dillon & Nagasaki, Graham, DiBiase, Orndorf.

May 1984/LeDuc-Sawyer, Assassins, The Men Who Make Wrestling Fly!

June 1984/Windham-Flair, Gilbert, Sawyer, Bockwinkel, Tsuruta.

July 1984/Flair-Gordy, Duggan, Blanchard, Brisco, AWA tag tourny.

August 1984/Rich & Gilbert, Adams-Hayes, Von Erich, Faces of Wrestling.

September 1984/Flair-Steamboat, Freebirds-Von Erichs—Special coverage of two big cards.

October 1984/Sullivan-Rhodes, Freebirds video, Atlas, Orange Bowl card.

November 1984/Von Erich & Billy Jack, Andre, Fab Ones, Summer Wars!

December 1984/Rich-Gilbert, Martel, Mascaras, Youngblood, World Class.

January 1985/Flair-McDaniel, Missing Link, Backlund, Fabulous Ones, Pro Wrestling USA, Valentine.

February 1985/Sullivan-Graham, Hernandez & Nicola Roberts, Bruno Jr., Steamboat, Warriors.

March 1985/Starcade '84 featuring Flair, Rhodes, Steamboat, Koloffs, 1985 Datebook, Hayes, wrestling school.

April 1985/Von Erich-Blackwell, Haynes-Barr, Hart, Irwin, 1984 in Pictures, Blair.

May 1985/Albano, Freebirds-Flair, Steamboat, Hernandez, Las Vegas.

June 1985/Pro Wrestling U.S.A., Von Erich, Richter, Windham, Taylor.

July 1985/Von Erich, WrestleMania, bloodiest matches, Backlund, Snuka.

August 1985/Flair-Nikita, Orndorf, Slaughter, Parade of Champions II.

September 1985/Adams-Von Erich, Orndorf, Sawyer, Kamala, Barr.

October 1985/Martel-Hayes, Richter, Savage, Adams, T.A., Warriors.

November 1985/Freebirds-Warriors, Mid-South, Haynes, Rhodes, Savage.

December 1985/Hogan, Zbyszko-Martel, Murdoch, Dillon, fiendish faces.

January 1986/Savage-Santana, Abdullah, Humongous, Von Raschke, Comiskey Park, Taylor.

February 1986/Junkyard Dog, Rude, Patrick, Garvin, Reed, Datebook.

March 1986/Starcade '85, Ventura, Windham, Sunshine, Slaughter.

April 1986/Savage-Hogan, Martel-Hansen, 1985 in Pictures, Warriors, DiBiase.

May 1986/Sammartino, R&R Express, Sunshine-Hyatt, Slater, Devastating Holds, Hall & Hennig.

June 1986/Hogan-Muraco, Midnight Express, Freebirds, Battle of Belts II.

July 1986/Orndorf-Piper, Blanchard-T.A., Matches of '80s, Sheepherders, Bockwinkel, Bulldogs.

August 1986/Crockett Cup Tourny, Jake Roberts, Midnight Rockers, Von Erichs, Wrestling II.

September 1986/Bulldogs, Blanchard-Gibson, Lugar, Dundee, UWF tourny.

October 1986/Orndorf, Rude-Brody, Bash, Bockwinkel, Gordy, Adams.

November 1986/Andersons-R&R Express, Machine, Gordy, Managers.

December 1986/Machines, Fantastics, Warriors, WWF Muchnick Tourny.

January 1987/Russians, Hyatt-Dark Journey, WWF Top 50, Fab Ones.

February 1987/Road Warriors, Savage, Windham & Lugar, 1987 Datebook.

March 1987/Kamala-Hogan, Starcade '86, Atlas, Williams, Tatum.

April 1987/1986 In Pictures, Kevin Von, Flair, Rich, Hennig-Bockwinkel.

May 1987/Nikita-Flair, Bulldogs, Albano's career, Snuka-DeBeers, Taylor.

June 1987/Hogan-Andre, Hall, Parsons, Garvin, WWF title history.

July 1987/Midnight Express, Savage-Steambat, Adams, NWA in Boston.

August 1987/Nord-Kevin, Armstrong-Flair, Hogan & Patera, Crockett Cup.

September 1987/Hogan, Akbar, Luger-Nikita, Summer Feuds, charity shows.

October 1987/Windham, Bigelow, Bockwinkel, Western States tourny.

November 1987/Bash, Honky Tonk, Hart, Sheepherders, Condrey.

December 1987/Grappling Ghouls, Hogan-Andre, Luger-Nikita, Boesch card

January 1988/Honky Tonk, Garvin, T.A. career, Arcidi, Hogan.

February 1988/Rhodes, Strike Force, Rich-Adonis, Hyatt, 1988 datebook.

March 1988/Starcade, Survivor Series, Simpson, Hennig, Zbyszko.

April 1988/1987 In Pictures, Tully & Arn, DiBiase, Kerry, Orton.

May 1988/Hawk-Flair, Andre-Hogan, Dangerously, Duggan, Mike George.

June 1988/Luger-Tully, DiBiase, Adams, NWA New York invasion.

July 1988/Savage wins WWF tourney, Rockers-Express, Hayes, Dusty-Rider.

August 1988/Luger and Sting win Crockett Cup, Savage-Dibiase, Nasty Boys, Ultimate Warrior.

September 1988/Predictions Through 1998, Williams, Rhodes, Bad Company, greatest Garden matches.

October 1988/Midnight Rockers, Sting, Taylor, Koloff, Hot Young Lions.

November 1988/R&R Express, Honky Tonk, Von Erichs, Great American Bash.

December 1988/Warriors, Samoan SWAT Team, Hart, Andre, Presidential Wrestlers.

January 1989/Jake-Cheryl-Rude, Sting, Lawler, Flair, Savage's career.

February 1989/The Champions in '89, Duggan, Roberts, 1989 datebook

March 1989/1988 IN Pictures, Taylor, Simmons, Wrestlers Then & Now.

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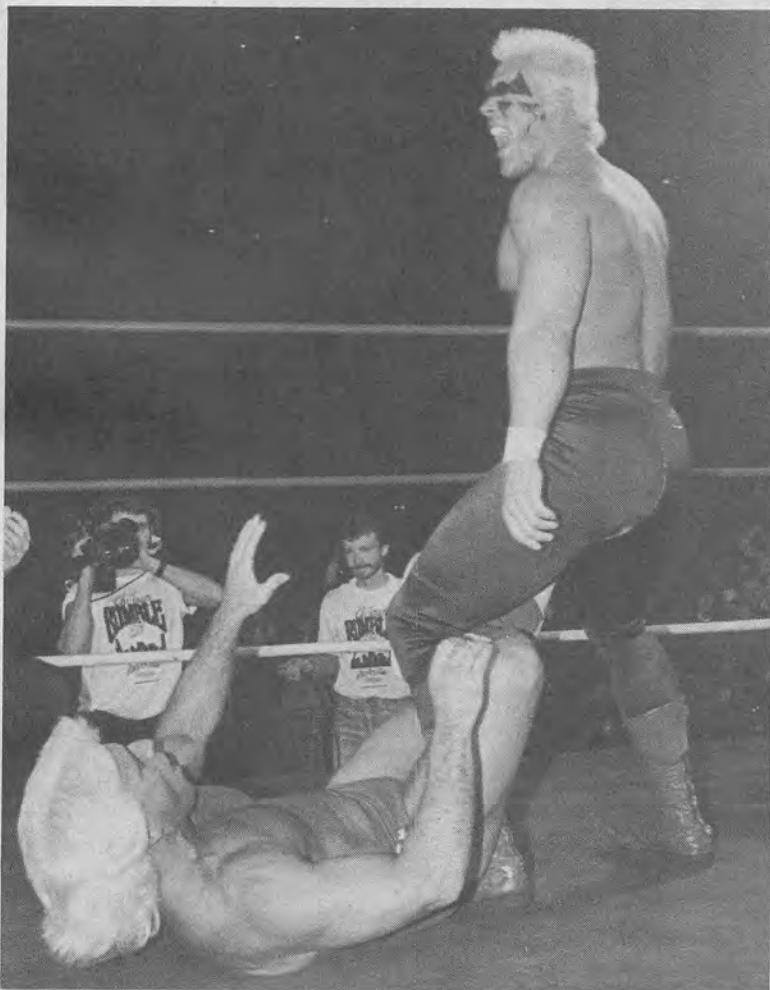
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STING

(Continued from page 33)



Sting sets Flair up for a figure-four (left). Flair kicks Sting in the ribs (above). Flair puts his leg on the ropes to get leverage for the pin, but Sting gets his shoulder up before the three-count (below). Flair resists Sting's backslide attempt (opposite page).

"I went one hour with the champ! Now he's gotta be thinking to himself, 'This guy definitely has what it takes to beat me.' I know it, he knows it, the whole world knows that Flair's a beaten man. Between me and Lex, we've rubbed him into the ground."

Of course, that night the belt was still securely fastened around Flair's waist. There was no change in the NWA's balance of power. Most importantly, Sting's progress over those 10 months could be easily measured: He was merely 15 minutes better in January than in March.

"You got that straight, brother," Flair said afterward. "Think about it: People are happy to tie me. Well, a tie's like kissing your sister unless you're champion, and that's what I am. I've had a million young kids go after me. Just because they



hold me to a draw, they think the next step is winning. Well, I've got news for them: They're dead wrong."

Flair, in this case, was dead right. Six days later at the Baltimore Arena, he scored a controversial pinfall victory over Sting in only 25 minutes. Flair draped his feet over the

ropes to gain leverage for the pin, but the point was clear: Flair put Sting in position for a pin, and did it early in the match. There's no doubt who has the upper hand now in the Flair-Sting feud.

But Sting may have a point when he says he's extinguished Flair's emotional fire. A grueling

schedule of title defenses over the past few months has taken its toll on the champion. Flair has faced top competition—including Sting, Luger, Rick Steiner, and Eddie Gilbert—several times a week. What price is he paying for this schedule when he wrestles an experienced veteran—and former champion—like Steamboat?

"You can't compare Steamboat to



Luger, Gilbert, Sting, or Steiner," former NWA and WWF World champion Buddy Rogers said. "Steamboat's in another hemisphere altogether. Luger, Gilbert, Sting, and Steiner all have glaring weaknesses. Either they're too small, too raw, or not well-rounded. As for Steamboat, he's wrestled the best and beaten the best. He's been champion and knows what it takes to get there. But if those other men have done anything to weaken Flair, he's in trouble."

And if Steamboat does take the title from Flair, Sting will be right there to take the credit.

"It's been a systematic annihilation," Sting boasted. "First destroy him mentally, then destroy him physically. Make it so he can't get up for a match, make it so he can't summon up that killer instinct when he needs it. Yeah, I've been working on Flair a long time, and it won't bother me at all if somebody else benefits from my work."

"He's a dead man, and I helped kill him."

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THE INSIDER

(Continued from page 16)

sues (the facts being one of them) were overlooked:

● The origins of Insurance Risk Martel's back injury. Martel's back has never been the same since the 1985 battles he waged against Stan Hansen—a feud that eventually cost him the AWA championship. This is a fact many wrestling fans might find mildly compelling, but which has no place in a federation bent on creating its own mythology.

● Jesse Ventura has (surprise, surprise) possessed a world championship belt. Jesse and the late Adrian Adonis defended the AWA World tag team title for nearly a year back in 1980 and '81. One could understand McMahon's reluctance to reveal that fact, though I doubt it might actually *ruin* his \$100-million promotion. But what was Jesse thinking

while McMahon accused him of coveting Strike Force's title when, in fact, *he did own one himself*, a title he and Adonis defended with more style, skill, and dignity than Strike Force ever could? Was his scarf so tightly wrapped around his skull he forgot about the old days of glory and triumph?

A stinging retort utilizing the truth (a retort that should have invoked the spirit of his old pal Adonis—who McMahon never liked—as a tough street brawler) would have reduced McMahon to his natural, gelatinous state. It was a retort begging to be launched. Ventura said nothing. Why?

Perhaps it's something more sinister and foreboding than we can even imagine. After all, Ventura's integrity is virtually unchallenged; one could hardly believe he would willingly accede to Mc-



Adrian Adonis and Jesse Ventura were AWA World tag team champions in 1980 and 1981, but one would never find that out from Ventura now. Ellner writes that wrestlers and commentators in the WWF forget the past at their own—or Vince McMahon's?—convenience.

Mahon's lunatic demands that he not talk about his non-WWF wrestling past.

But how do we explain Harley Race? If Bruno Sammartino is a "Living Legend," what does that make *seven-time* NWA World champion Race? A demi-god? A prophet? Yet, has there ever been mention of Race's place in wrestling's pantheon? Race's WWF "coronation" was embarrassing for a man of his reputation (further proof that money has no honor); he became a King of fools, buffoons, and clowns. But he issued not a peep of protest, nor did anyone else.

Is it possible that Vince McMahon is running a modern-day concentration camp for his WWF newcomers, brainwashing them into forgetting they ever led previous wrestling lives? What must this WWF reindoctrination be like? Why don't Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson ever mention The Four Horsemen? Why won't Ronnie Garvin respond to questions about his NWA title reign?

It's all very frightening and unfortunate. With the WWF as popular as it is, there will be entire generations of wrestling fans without any sense of history whatsoever. For a sport so rich in tradition, what McMahon is doing is a moral violation of the highest order.

How can one appreciate Hercules Hernandez without recalling his ancient wars against the Von Erichs? What of Jimmy Hart's halcyon days in the old Mid-Southern area? McMahon's crusade *must* be stopped.

NEWS ITEM: RICKY MORTON TURNS BAD

And he smells worse than milk turning bad.

NEWS ITEM: DUSTY LEAVES NWA; WINDS UP IN FLORIDA

There goes spring break. □

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RICK STEINER

(Continued from page 37)

and Nikita Koloff.

It has not been an easy 15 years for Rhodes, although he has been very successful. Dusty is a three-time former NWA World champion and won the 1987 Crockett Cup with Nikita Koloff. He has made friends out of enemies

and enemies out of friends. He is grateful so many men have come to his aid. Because, during those 15 years, there was one constant in the NWA: Every rulebreaker went after Rhodes and every fan favorite was on his side. He was the polarizing force in

the federation.

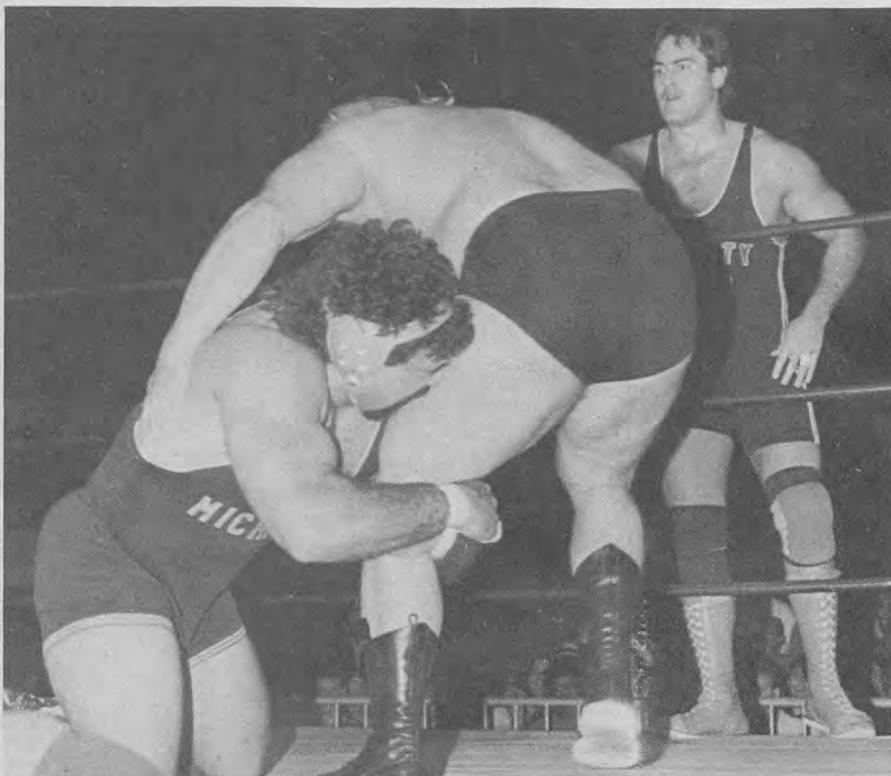
Now that Dusty is gone, the same thing is happening to Steiner.

Steiner's primary battle these days is against Rotundo, Sullivan, and Varsity Club newcomer Steve Williams. When Steiner won the TV title from Rotundo at Starrcade '88, the war intensified. But the loveable "Dogfaced Gremlin" hasn't taken on the Varsity Club alone. Sting, Lex Luger, Junkyard Dog, and even Rhodes, prior to his departure, all offered their assistance.

Steiner, joined by various combinations of these men, has also wrestled The Road Warriors and Paul Ellering several times in six-man tag team matches. His main priority, however, is defending the TV title he took so much pleasure in winning.

"That's right, because if Rotundo or Williams have the TV belt, it means I don't have it," Steiner said. "That idiot

Steiner armtwists Road Warrior Hawk (left) and headlocks former Varsity Club partner Mike Rotundo (bottom left). The "Dogfaced Gremlin," now one of the most popular men in the NWA—and the target of every rulebreaker—bites Kevin Sullivan on the leg (below) and twists his arm (opposite page).





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Rotundo, he thought I couldn't beat him, and then when I did, he couldn't believe it. Both those guys say they want the belt back, but there's no way they're gonna get it. Besides, I've got friends now, and they're all gonna help me out. And I'm not just talkin' about Alex and Spike."

Alex, of course, is the name Steiner gave the drawing he has on his right hand; he refers to Alex as his manager and friend. Spike is Steiner's pet dog and has been the target of several recent dognapping attempts. Steiner has built a doghouse for Spike and hired a bodyguard to protect the mutt. Rumors have circulated that the bodyguard is Abdullah the Butcher.

It is yet another example of how Steiner, like Rhodes, has surrounded himself with a circle of friends to fight off the many enemies who want what he has. Rulebreakers were always jealous of Rhodes' popularity. Now they're jealous of Steiner, who has especially endeared himself with the young fans. Take note, Hulk Hogan: Steiner calls the youngsters "little gremlins."

Steiner is riding an amazing wave of popularity, but he's also willing to fight against the most dangerous men in the sport. Like Rhodes, Steiner was once part of that evil element. Like Rhodes, he is now on the side of good.

Rick Steiner is living The American Dream. □

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ON ASSIGNMENT

(Continued from page 18)

"Not just moves," Richter said, "but how to draw up contracts, ask for guarantees, and so on. Women must learn the business side of wrestling to protect themselves from all the rip-off artists out there."

Despite juggling several feuds at the moment, including a heated battle against *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* 1988 Rookie of the Year Madusa Miceli, Richter wishes her comrades would lend each other a little moral support.

"It's difficult enough for a woman to make it in pro wrestling," Richter said. "Compound the physical difficulties with the loneliness of the road, the fears of traveling alone and staying in motels, and you get the picture. Since there aren't many of us out there,

I think it's very important that we establish some type of network."

"If you come into a strange town," Richter continued, "perhaps a few local girls can put you up, show you where the gyms are, and generally make your stay more relaxing and comfortable. We have to watch out for ourselves; no one is going to do it for us."

Richter's words should be applauded, and thick-headed promoters should take heed. The stylish lady was in the forefront of the pro wrestling boom nurtured in the mid-'80s. Women are powerful drawing cards. If they are promoted correctly, they can not only enhance a good roster of male stars, but can attract new fans to the sport.

To his credit, Vince McMahon was not afraid to place the power of the WWF behind Richter; the results spoke for themselves. Isn't it time Rockin' Robin deserved the same promotional consideration? And isn't it time some other sharp-eyed promoters picked up that gauntlet?

Ric Flair and Barry Windham vs. Eddie Gilbert and ... Rick Steamboat. The match that marked Steamboat's return to the ring promises to help regenerate the new Ted Turner-owned NWA, as "The Dragon" makes his way around the circuit.

Steamboat was very excited and a little apprehensive about his comeback. "Every time you return after a long layoff you're wary," he said between weightlifting sets at his health club. Steamboat had been training seriously for several weeks in anticipation of his return. "The fact is, I feel like I'm in the best shape of my career. Life in the Carolinas is very easygoing and relaxing, not at all like it was when I was traveling around the



Wendi Richter, the champion of three federations, piledrives Madusa Miceli.



Rick Steamboat pumps iron in preparation for his return to the ring.

world in the WWF. It's very easy to remain fit—especially since I own a health club."

Steamboat's debut match was impressive—if not downright spectacular—considering the time he spent away from active competition. "It was funny teaming with Gilbert; I'm more of a singles wrestler, but having someone to tag off to probably made that first match back just a bit easier."

Steamboat's return was not out of a need for glory or to help out an old acquaintance. His designs are firmly set upon the jeweled belt of Ric Flair, and his motivations are the most admirable of all.

"I'm looking to secure the future of my son, Ricky, and I'm looking to gain that world title that has eluded me my whole career. This is a family goal. I'm doing this not only for myself, but also for my son, and for my wife. We're all in this campaign together."

A wrestler who places family above feuding, his son's welfare and future above his own ego and pocketbook, his wife above any craven bloodlust. Bravo, Rick Steamboat! What a breath of fresh air you are today! □

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SUMMER 1986/Color pinup: Rock 'n' Roll Express & Magnum T.A. Stories include: Flair, Warriors, JYD, Magnum, Williams.

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FALL 1987/Color pinup: Dark Journey. Stories include: Albano, Hogan, T.A., Lane, Hyatt, Hennig, Luger.

WINTER 1987/Color pinup: Jesse Ventura. Stories include: Kerry, Rhodes, Hogan, Flair, Honky Tonk, DiBiase.

SPRING 1988/Color pinup: Elizabeth. Stories include: Hennig, Koloff, Savage, Strike Force, Warriors, Andre-Hogan.

SUMMER 1988/Color pinup: Missy Hyatt. Stories include: Rock 'n' Roll Express, Hogan, Sting, Luger, Owen Hart, Animal.

FALL 1988/Color pinup: Madusa Miceli. Stories include: Savage, Hyatt, Von Erich, Triple Dome, Demolition, Steamboat, Heenan, Lawler.

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HOGAN & ELIZABETH

(Continued from page 35)

love Elizabeth." The rest was just a blur. By the time Hogan said "like a sister," Savage was already in another world, plotting ways to stave off this perceived "threat" to what he considers his very own.

But don't hold Hogan blameless. It doesn't take much perception to realize that Savage is jealous and must be handled with kid gloves when dealing with Elizabeth. Is it really necessary for Hogan to kiss and hug Elizabeth and lift her upon his shoulders? Is it really necessary for him to bring her to ringside for his matches? The "Hulkster" always got along well without her.

It would've been so easy for Hogan, Savage, and Elizabeth to coexist peacefully. They could've been one of the greatest alliances

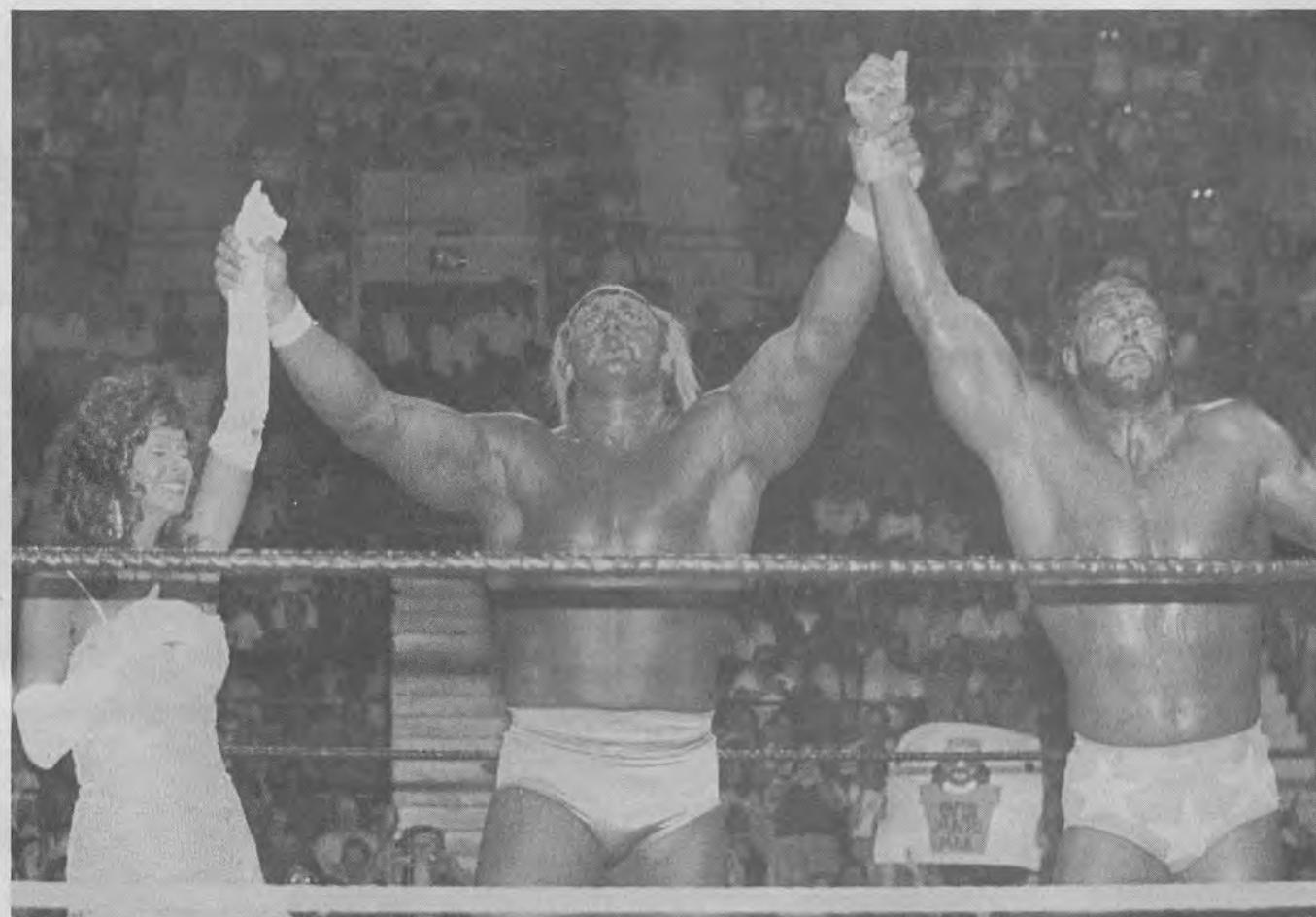
ever, a tag team too powerful to overcome, each man feeding off the other's encouragement in singles matches. But immaturity has torn them apart, and they have nobody to blame but themselves.

The only faultless person in this situation is Elizabeth. She has handled a difficult problem with poise, grace, and diplomacy. When asked before the Royal Rumble whom she would root for if Hogan and Savage squared off, Elizabeth said, "I'm hoping that doesn't happen." When it did happen, Elizabeth quickly ran into the ring and defused an explosive crisis.

When Hogan asks her for a kiss, she offers him a friendly peck on the cheek while making it clear that her true feelings are for Savage. When Savage is in trou-

ble, she calls for Hogan. When Hogan is in trouble, she calls for Savage. Caught in the middle—a situation a woman with Elizabeth's beauty has most likely been in many times before—she has done everything possible to keep the Megapowers together.

The ironic part of this is that Hogan's love for Elizabeth is purely innocent. Hogan is married with a year-old baby girl. He is very happy with the lifestyle he leads outside the ring and has no desires to destroy it by having a messy—and public—affair with Elizabeth. Of course, Hogan is an outgoing person. He likes to display his emotions and show his affection for others. Thus, his actions toward Elizabeth can be—and often are—wrongly perceived when no slight is intended.



Elizabeth was relieved when Hogan and Savage joined forces in 1987, but now she's worried: The two men she cares about most are getting ready to destroy each other!

Savage has always been overprotective of Elizabeth. Several times, he nearly came to blows with George Steele because "The Animal" was making advances on Elizabeth. But only a paranoid individual like Savage would see the neanderthalic Steele as a threat. Could you imagine Steele and Elizabeth walking into a fancy restaurant, arm-in-arm, and sharing an intimate, candlelight dinner? It's preposterous!

Elizabeth loves Savage. That has always been clear. She will do anything to help him and would do nothing to hurt him. She is, however, caught between two men who are acting like spoiled boys. Savage refuses to realize that Hogan is a friend and means no harm. Hogan refuses to realize that Savage is insanely jealous and paranoid.

Perhaps the Megapowers' alliance was never meant to be.

Indeed, when explosive personalities get together, it is almost inevitable that there will be trouble. Consider the New York Yankees in the mid- to late-1970s. They were successful, but there was always trouble brewing. And that's what's happening in the WWF. There are two remarkably strong personalities at conflict, two very different kinds of people. It's arguable, in fact, to say that things were more natural for Hogan and Savage when they were going *against* each other.

Well, now it's going to happen again. Ironically, the wrestling world will benefit from this war. It promises to be an outstanding battle and will capture the imagination of millions of viewers. But is it necessary? Did it have to happen? Couldn't these two men just get along without feuding?

Didn't Savage hear what Hogan was saying? Didn't Hogan realize what Savage was hearing?

This is a wrestling tragedy—one that promises to be played out in more than one act. □

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TOP 15

- 1—**RANDY SAVAGE**
WWF World champion
- 2—**RIC FLAIR**
NWA World champion
- 3—**JERRY LAWLER**
World Class champion

NWA

- 1—**RIC FLAIR**
243, Minneapolis, MN
- 2—**BARRY WINDHAM**
263, Sweetwater, TX
- 3—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
238, Honolulu, HI

AWA

- 1—**GREG GAGNE**
220, Robbinsdale, MN
- 2—**KERRY VON ERICH**
260, Denton, TX
- 3—**DON MURACO**
274, Sunset Beach, HI

WWF

- 1—**RANDY SAVAGE**
245, Sarasota, FL
- 2—**ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
280, Queens, NY
- 3—**BIG BOSSMAN**
348, Cobb County, GA

MOST POPULAR

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Last month: No. 3 Most Hated

TAG TEAMS

- 1—**THE ROAD WARRIORS**
NWA World tag team champions
- 2—**DEMOLITION**
WWF World tag team champions
- 3—**STAN LANE & BOBBY EATON**
No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 4—**THE WARLORD & THE BARBARIAN**
No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 5—**PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**
AWA World tag team champions

- 4—**HULK HOGAN**
No. 3 contender: WWF title
- 5—**BARRY WINDHAM**
U.S. heavyweight champion
- 6—**STING**
No. 2 contender: NWA title
- 7—**ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
WWF Intercontinental champ

- 8—**LEX LUGER**
No. 4 contender: NWA title
- 9—**KERRY VON ERICH**
No. 2 contender: AWA/WCCW titles
- 10—**BIG BOSSMAN**
No. 2 contender: WWF title
- 11—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
No. 3 contender: NWA title

- 12—**ERIC EMBRY**
WCCW light heavyweight champion
- 13—**RICK STEINER**
NWA TV champion
- 14—**DON MURACO**
Stampede North American champion
- 15—**TOM PRICHARD**
CWF champion

- 4—**STING**
260, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—**EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
- 6—**RICK STEINER**
248, Detroit, MI
- 7—**LEX LUGER**
268, Chicago, IL

- 8—**JUNKYARD DOG**
305, Charlotte, NC
- 9—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
245, Syracuse, NY
- 10—**MICHAEL HAYES**
255, Marietta, GA
- 11—**BUTCH REED**
265, Kansas City, MO

- 12—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
265, Norman, OK
- 13—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
252, Boston, MA
- 14—**KENDALL WINDHAM**
220, Sweetwater, TX
- 15—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCH**
360, Khartoum, Sudan

- 4—**WAHOO McDANIEL**
280, Midland, TX
- 5—**MANNY FERNANDEZ**
245, El Paso, TX
- 6—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
310, Parris Island, SC
- 7—**IRON SHEIK**
262, Teheran, Iran

- 8—**LARRY ZBYSZKO**
248, Pittsburgh, PA
- 9—**COL. DeBEERS**
248, Cape Town, S. Africa
- 10—**PAT TANAKA**
265, Tokyo, Japan
- 11—**PAUL DIAMOND**
230, Thunder Bay, Ontario

- 12—**MANDO GUERRERO**
225, Mexico City, Mexico
- 13—**RICKY RICE**
230, Edina, MN
- 14—**CHAVO GUERRERO**
230, Mexico City, Mexico
- 15—**BRAD RHEINGANS**
248, Appleton, MN

- 4—**HULK HOGAN**
302, Venice Beach, CA
- 5—**AKEEM**
468, Chicago, IL
- 6—**GREG VALENTINE**
243, Seattle, WA
- 7—**BAD NEWS BROWN**
280, New York, NY

- 8—**ANDRE THE GIANT**
497, Grenoble, France
- 9—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
280, Glens Falls, NY
- 10—**CURT HENNIG**
235, Minneapolis, MN
- 11—**JOHN STUDD**
364, Los Angeles, CA

- 12—**TED DiBIASE**
247, Omaha, NE
- 13—**TERRY TAYLOR**
225, Vero Beach, FL
- 14—**KING HAKU**
270, Tonga
- 15—**THE HONKY TONK MAN**
255, Memphis, TN

- 4—**ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
- 5—**RICK STEINER**
Last month: No. 6 Most Popular
- 6—**LEX LUGER**
Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
- 7—**RICK STEAMBOAT**
Last month: unrated

- 8—**HACKSAW DUGGAN**
Last month: No. 9 Most Popular
- 9—**DUSTY RHODES**
Last month: No. 7 Most Popular
- 10—**KERRY VON ERICH**
Last month: No. 10 Most Popular
- 11—**JERRY LAWLER**
Last month: No. 11 Most Hated

- 12—**JEFF JARRETT**
Last month: No. 12 Most Popular
- 13—**EDDIE GILBERT**
Last month: unrated
- 14—**SGT. SLAUGHTER**
Last month: No. 15 Most Popular
- 15—**HERCULES HERNANDEZ**
Last month: No. 13 Most Popular

- 4—**AKEEM**
Last month: unrated
- 5—**ANDRE THE GIANT**
Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
- 6—**MIKE ROTUNDO**
Last month: No. 7 Most Hated
- 7—**STEVE WILLIAMS**
Last month: No. 10 Most Hated

- 8—**BAD NEWS BROWN**
Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
- 9—**RICK MORTON**
Last month: unrated
- 10—**ICEMAN PARSONS**
Last month: No. 9 Most Hated
- 11—**KEVIN SULLIVAN**
Last month: No. 12 Most Popular

- 12—**COL. DeBEERS**
Last month: No. 13 Most Popular
- 13—**RICK RUDE**
Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
- 14—**DINO BRAVO**
Last month: No. 14 Most Hated
- 15—**JERRY LAWLER**
Last month: No. 11 Most Hated

- 6—**STEVE WILLIAMS & KEVIN SULLIVAN**
U.S. tag team champions
- 7—**THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM**
World Class tag team champions
- 8—**DENNIS CONDRAY & RANDY ROSE**
No. 3 contenders: NWA tag team title
- 9—**ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN**
CWA tag team champions
- 10—**TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title

- 11—**JERRY STUBBS & TONY ANTHONY**
CWF tag team champions
- 12—**JACQUES & RAYMOND ROUGEAU**
No. 3 contenders: WWF tag team title
- 13—**VULKAN & MAKHAN SINGH**
Stampede tag team champions
- 14—**DAN KROFFAT & ISLANDER TAMA**
WWC tag team champions
- 15—**THE TERMINATOR & JOHNNY ACE**
FCW tag team champions

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler . . . "Most Popular" and "Most Hated" ratings are based on nationwide surveys of wrestling fans and on mail that comes to our offices . . . Championships marked with asterisks on the "Roll Call of Champions" indicate title changes that have taken place since our previous issue . . . The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place .

For period ended January 31, 1989

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-CALIFORNIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING CHAMPION:

CHAVO GUERRERO

(September 23, 1988; from Jack Armstrong; Lancaster, CA)

ALL-CALIFORNIA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

PETER MAIVIA JR. & MANDO GUERRERO

(September 24, 1988; from The Lords of Discipline; Victorville, CA)

ALL-JAPAN ASIAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

TOSHIAKI KAWADA & SAMPSON FUYUKI

(September 15, 1988; from Shinichi Nakano & Shunji Cakano; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: JUMBO TSURUTA

(April 14, 1988; from Bruiser Brody; Sendai, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

STAN HANSEN & TERRY GORDY

(December 16, 1988; tournament final over Genichiro Tenryu & Toshiaki Kawada; Tokyo, Japan)

* ALL-JAPAN JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MIGHTY INOUE

(January 25, 1989; from Joe Malenko; Osaka, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(July 27, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu; Nagano, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPION: TITLE HELD UP

(most recently held by Chigusa Nagoya)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S CHAMPION: MIKA KOMATSU

(July 10, 1988; from Yumi Ogura; Edmonton, Alberta, Canada)

ALL-JAPAN WOMEN'S WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MIKA KOMATSU & YUMI OGURA

(August 25, 1988; from Yumiko Hotta & Mitsuko Nishiwaki; Kawasaki, Japan)

AWA TV CHAMPION: GREG GAGNE

(December 13, 1988; from Ron Garvin; Chicago, IL)

AWA WORLD WOMEN'S CHAMPION: WENDI RICHTER

(November 26, 1988; from Madusa Miceli; Bloomington, MN)

AWA WORLD CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Jerry Lawler)

AWA WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND

(March 19, 1988; from The Midnight Rockers; Las Vegas, NV)

* BRITISH COMMONWEALTH CHAMPION: CHRIS BENOIT

(January 13, 1989; from Johnny Smith; Calgary, Alberta)

CONTINENTAL HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TOM PRICHARD

(October 3, 1988; tournament final over Tony Anthony; Birmingham, AL)

CONTINENTAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JERRY STUBBS & TONY ANTHONY

(December 25, 1988; from the Bullet & Brad Armstrong; Knoxville, TN)

CONTINENTAL U.S. JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN DAVIS

(November 2, 1988; from Ken Wayne; Harriman, TN)

CWA CHAMPION: DUTCH MANTEL

(January 24, 1989; from Wendell Cooley; Stanton, KY)

CWA TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ROBERT FULLER & JIMMY GOLDEN

(November 7, 1988; from Cactus Jack & Gary Young; Memphis, TN)

FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING CHAMPION: MIKE GRAHAM

(December 25, 1988; from The Terminator; Tampa, FL)

FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:

JIM BACKLUND

(December 10, 1988; from Tyree Pride; Tampa, FL)

* FLORIDA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

JOHNNY ACE & THE TERMINATOR

(January 26, 1989; from The Nasty Boys; Tampa, FL)

IWGP CHAMPION: TATSUJI FUJINAMI

(June 24, 1988; over Riki Choshu; Osaka, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MASA SAITO & RIKI CHOSHU

(June 10, 1988; from Tatsumi Fujinami & Kengo Kimura; Hiroshima, Japan)

IWGP JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHIRO KOSHINAKA

(June 24, 1988; from Owen Hart; Osaka, Japan)

NWA SIX-MAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

THE ROAD WARRIORS & GENICHIRO TENRYU

(December 7, 1988; via Animal's victory over Dusty Rhodes; Chattanooga, TN)

NWA TV CHAMPION: RICK STEINER

(December 26, 1988; from Mike Rotundo; Norfolk, VA)

NWA WORLD CHAMPION: RIC FLAIR

(November 26, 1987; from Ronnie Garvin; Chicago, IL)

NATIONAL WRESTLING FEDERATION CHAMPION: JULES STRONGBOW

(by NWF officials' decision)

PACIFIC NORTHWEST CHAMPION: TOP GUN

(December 25, 1988; from The Grappler; Portland, OR)

* PACIFIC NORTHWEST TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

STEVE DOLL & SCOTT PETERSEN

(January 7, 1989; from The Grappler & Abughadid; Portland, OR)

PWF CHAMPION: STAN HANSEN

(July 27, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu; Nagano, Japan)

PWF TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JUMBO TSURUTA & YOSHIKI YATSU

(August 30, 1988; from Genichiro Tenryu & Ashura Hara; Osaka, Japan)

STAMPEDE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: DON MURACO

(December 9, 1988; from Makhan Singh; Medicine Hat, Alberta)

STAMPEDE INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MAKHAN & VULKAN SINGH

(December 30, 1988; from The British Bulldogs; Calgary, Alberta)

U.S. CHAMPION: BARRY WINDHAM

(May 13, 1988; tournament final over Nikita Koloff; Houston, TX)

U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KEVIN SULLIVAN & STEVE WILLIAMS

(December 26, 1988; from The Fantastics; Norfolk, VA)

WORLD CLASS CHAMPION: JERRY LAWLER

(December 13, 1988; from Jerry Von Erich; Chicago, IL)

* WORLD CLASS LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: ERIC EMBRY

(January 14, 1989; from Cactus Jack; Dallas, TX)

WORLD CLASS TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE SAMOAN SWAT TEAM

(October 17, 1988; from Michael Hayes & Steve Cox; Ft. Worth, TX)

WORLD CLASS TEXAS CHAMPION: ICEMAN PARSONS

(August 5, 1988; from Jerry Von Erich, subbing for Kevin Von Erich; Dallas, TX)

WWC CARIBBEAN CHAMPION: JASON THE TERRIBLE

(November 19, 1988; from TNT; Carolina, Puerto Rico)

WWC CARIBBEAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:

MIGUEL PEREZ JR. & HURRICANE CASTILLO JR.

(October 15, 1988; from Bobby Jaggers & Dan Kroffat; Bayamon, Puerto Rico)

* WWC JR. HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: RICKY SANTANA

(January 14, 1989; from El Prophet; Caguas, Puerto Rico)

WWC NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER

(January 30, 1988; from Miguel Perez Jr.; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWC PUERTO RICAN CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT

(most recently held by Hercules Ayala)

* WWC TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: DAN KROFFAT & ISLANDER TAMA

(January 6, 1989; from Brad & Bart Batten; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWC UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: CARLOS COLON

(December 18, 1988; from Ronnie Garvin; San Juan, Puerto Rico)

WWC WOMEN'S CHAMPION: WENDI RICHTER

(July 28, 1987; from Monster Ripper; Trinidad, West Indies)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR

(August 29, 1988; from The Honky Tonk Man; New York, NY)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: RANDY SAVAGE

(March 27, 1988; tournament final over Ted DiBiase; Atlantic City, NJ)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: DEMOLITION

(March 27, 1988; from Rick Martel & Titus Santana; Atlantic City, NJ)

WWF WOMEN'S CHAMPION: ROCKIN' ROBIN

(October 7, 1988; from Sherri Martel; Paris, France)

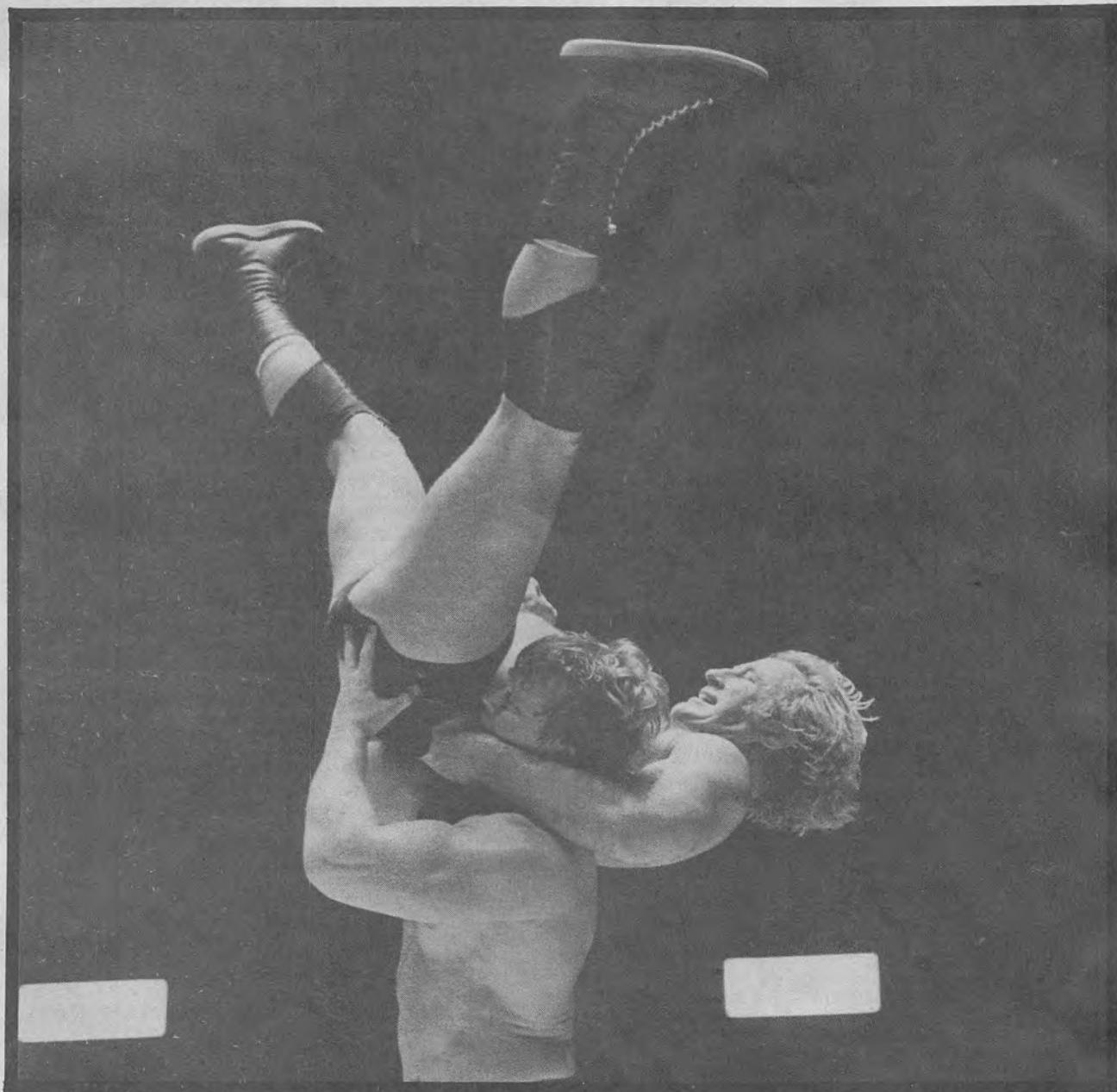
WWF WOMEN'S TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LELANI KAI & JUDY MARTIN

(June 8, 1988; from The Jumping Bomb Angels; Omiya City, Japan)

Blast From The Past

This Month In Wrestling History

“TWO CHAMPIONS, ONE GOAL”



NICK BOCKWINKEL vs. BOB BACKLUND

March 25, 1979

WWF World champion Bob Backlund prepares to deliver an atomic spinecrusher against AWA World champion Nick Bockwinkel in the first WWF vs. AWA title unification match ever held. Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens was packed for this battle pitting the ultra-scientific Backlund against the canny veteran Bockwinkel, one of the most hated men in the sport. The champions battled to a hard-fought 39-minute double-countout, but the fans in attendance did not go home disappointed. They knew they had witnessed a titanic struggle between two legendary athletes.



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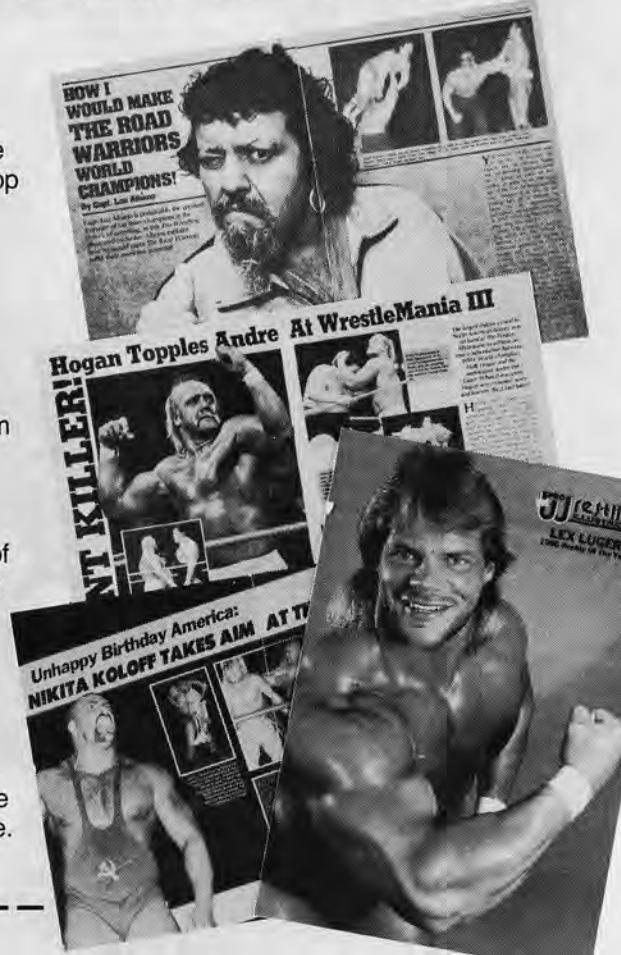
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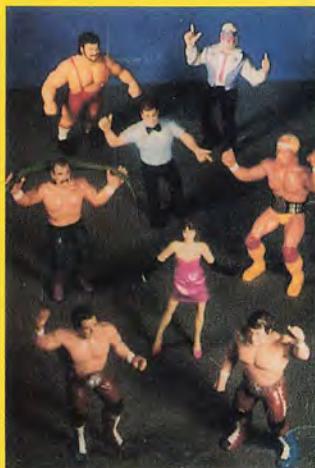
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